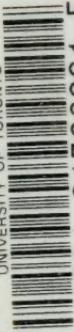


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# KEATS



# POEMS OF KEATS

AN ANTHOLOGY

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE  
POET'S DEATH, FEBRUARY 23

1821

[Ed. by Collier-Sanderson]



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THIS ANTHOLOGY, in commemoration of the death of Keats, is based on the Anthology printed and published at the Doves Press in 1914. In the arrangement of the Poems, the Sonnet—Bright star ! Would I were constant as thou art—has been placed first, that from the outset the Reader may have present to his imagination the ever threatening cry towards which, deathwards progressing, all the passion of the Poet is tending, whilst at the end has been placed the earlier sonnet—Much have I travelled in the realms of gold—that the final vision of the Poet may be of one upon whom, as upon some watcher of the skies, has burst the silvery splendour of a new and more beauteous star—Swung high in unascended majesty—his own predestined sphere of song accomplished, unquenchably the same, by passion uneclipsed.

The intervenient Poems are arranged in five Parts. In Part I, entitled Induction, I have placed, as specimens of his earlier work, and for their own sake, three poems selected from the Poet's first collection of verse, published in 1817 ; i, a poem originally, and in this Anthology, called *Endymion*, perhaps at one time intended as an introduction to the greater poem of that name ; ii, a specimen of an Induction ; and iii, *Sleep and Poetry*, the first ambitious composition of the Poet and, as has been well said, at once the expression of his own poetic aspirations and a declaration of war against the poetic ideals of the eighteenth century. In Parts II and IV I have arranged the

Tales and Odes and Roundelay which appeared in the second collection of Poems published in the Lamia Volume of 1820; and between Parts II and IV, in Part III, I have inserted eighteen Sonnets, all expressive, or illustrative, of the passions and affections of the Poet's tragic life; though not to him, in life, came the day to be born of the gentle South, or, as described in Sonnet XVII, a Poet's death. Finally, in Part V, I have placed two works of noble note, the two versions of Hyperion, the Fragment and the Dream, and so have closed this many-flowered and many-coloured commemorative Anthology of the Poet's verse.

The Poet was born at Finsbury on the 31st October, 1795, and on the 23rd February, 1821, died at Rome, where, beside the ashes of Shelley, his body, the broken lily, lies.

T. J. COBDEN-SANDERSON.

## CONTENTS

	Page
PREFATORY NOTE . . . . .	9
SONNET :	
Bright Star ! would I were stedfast as thou art . . . . .	18
PART I. INDUCTION :	
i. ENDYMION (1816).	
I stood tiptoe upon a little hill . . . . .	21
ii. SPECIMEN OF AN INDUCTION.	
Lo ! I must tell a tale of chivalry . . . . .	30
iii. SLEEP AND POETRY.	
What is more gentle than a wind in summer ? . . . . .	33
PART II. TALES (with included Lyrics) :	
i. ISABELLA.	
Fair Isabel, poor simple Isabel ! . . . . .	48
ii. FAERY SONG.	
Shed no tear ! Oh, shed no tear ! . . . . .	69
iii. THE EVE OF ST MARK.	
Upon a Sabbath-day it fell . . . . .	70
iv. SONG.	
The stranger lighted from his steed . . . . .	75
v. THE EVE OF ST AGNES.	
St Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was ! . . . . .	76
vi. LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCE.	
O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms . . . . .	90
vii. LAMIA.	
Upon a time, before the faery broods . . . . .	92

PART III. SONNETS :	Page
i. Many the wonders I this day have seen	118
ii. Small, busy flames play through the fresh laid coals . . . . .	118
iii. O solitude ! If I must with thee dwell .	119
iv. Keen, fitful gusts are whisp'ring here and there . . . . .	119
v. How many bards gild the lapses of time	120
vi. The poetry of earth is never dead .	120
vii. To one who has been long in city pent	121
viii. O golden-tongued Romance with serene lute . . . . .	121
ix. Great spirits now on earth are sojourning	122
x. When I have fears that I may cease to be	122
xi. Time's sea hath been five years at its slow ebb . . . . .	123
xii. I cry your mercy—pity—love !—ay, love	123
xiii. O soft embalmer 'of the still midnight !	124
xiv. As Hermes once took to his feathers light	124
xv. Come hither all sweet maidens soberly .	125
xvi. Why did I laugh to-night ? No voice will tell. . . . .	125
xvii. After dark vapors have oppress'd our plains . . . . .	126
xviii. Four seasons fill the measure of the year	126

#### PART IV : ODES (with included Roundelays) :

##### i. TO MAIA.

Mother of Hermes ! and still youthful  
Maia ! . . . . .

128

13

PART IV (Continued) :		Page
ii. TO PAN.	O Thou, whose mighty palace roof doth hang . . . . .	129
iii. TO SORROW.	O Sorrow . . . . .	132
iv. TO A NIGHTINGALE.	My heart aches, and a drowsy numb- ness pains . . . . .	138
v. ON A GRECIAN URN.	Thou still unravish'd bride of quiet- ness . . . . .	142
vi. TO PSYCHE.	O goddess ! hear these tuneless num- bers, wrung . . . . .	144
vii. FANCY.	Ever let the Fancy roam . . . . .	147
viii. ODE.	Bards of Passion and of Mirth . . . .	151
ix. ON THE MERMAID TAVERN.	Souls of Poets dead and gone . . . .	153
x. ROBIN HOOD.	No ! those days are gone away . . . .	154
xi. TO AUTUMN.	Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness .	157
xii. ON MELANCHOLY.	No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist .	159
xiii. ON INDOLENCE.	One morn before me were three figures seen . . . . .	161

PART IV (Continued) :	Page
xiv. THE THRUSH.	
O thou! whose face hath felt the Winter's wind . . . . .	164
PART V. HYPERION.	
A. HYPERION : A FRAGMENT.	
Deep in the shady sadness of a vale .	166
B. THE FALL OF HYPERION : A DREAM.	
Fanatics have their dreams, wherewith they weave . . . . .	198
SONNET :	
Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold	218
TABLE OF YEARS . . . . .	
	219



## SONNET

BRIGHT STAR, would I were stedfast as thou art :  
    Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night  
And watching, with eternal lids apart,  
    Like nature's patient sleepless Eremite,  
The moving waters at their priestlike task  
    Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,  
Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask  
    Of snow upon the mountains and the moors ;  
No—yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,  
    Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,  
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,  
    Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,  
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,  
    And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

# POEMS

## PART I. INDUCTION

I STOOD tip-toe upon a little hill,  
The air was cooling, and so very still,  
That the sweet buds which with a modest pride  
Pull droopingly, in slanting curve aside,  
Their scantily leaved, and finely tapering stems,  
Had not yet lost those starry diadems  
Caught from the early sobbing of the morn.  
The clouds were pure and white as flocks new shorn,  
And fresh from the clear brook ; sweetly they slept  
On the blue fields of heaven, and then there crept  
A little noiseless noise among the leaves,  
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves :  
For not the faintest motion could be seen  
Of all the shades that slanted o'er the green.  
There was wide wand'ring for the greediest eye,  
To peer about upon variety ;  
Far round the horizon's crystal air to skim,  
And trace the dwindled edgings of its brim ;  
To picture out the quaint and curious bending  
Of a fresh woodland alley, never ending ;  
Or by the bowery clefts, and leafy shelves,  
Guess where the jaunty streams refresh themselves.  
I gazed awhile, and felt as light and free  
As though the fanning wings of Mercury  
Had play'd upon my heels : I was light-hearted,  
And many pleasures to my vision started :  
So I straightway began to pluck a posy  
Of luxuries bright, milky, soft, and rosy.  
¶ A bush of May flowers with the bees about them ;

**PART I** Ah, sure no tasteful nook would be without them ;  
i And let a lush laburnum oversweep them,  
And let long grass grow round the roots to keep them  
Moist, cool and green ; and shade the violets,  
That they may bind the moss in leafy nets.  
¶ A filbert hedge with wild briar overtwinéd,  
And clumps of woodbine taking the soft wind  
Upon their summer thrones ; there too should be  
The frequent chequer of a youngling tree,  
That with a score of light green brethren shoots  
From the quaint mossiness of aged roots :  
Round which is heard a spring-head of clear waters  
Babbling so wildly of its lovely daughters,  
The spreading blue bells : it may haply mourn  
That such fair clusters should be rudely torn  
From their fresh beds, and scatter'd thoughtlessly  
By infant hands, left on the path to die.  
¶ Open afresh your round of starry folds,  
Ye ardent marigolds !  
Dry up the moisture from your golden lids,  
For great Apollo bids  
That in these days your praises should be sung  
On many harps, which he has lately strung ;  
And when again your dewiness he kisses,  
Tell him, I have you in my world of blisses :  
So haply when I rove in some far vale,  
His mighty voice may come upon the gale.  
¶ Here are sweet peas, on tip-toe for a flight :  
With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white,

And taper fingers catching at all things,  
To bind them all about with tiny rings.  
¶ Linger awhile upon some bending planks  
That lean against a streamlet's rushy banks,  
And watch intently Nature's gentle doings :  
They will be found softer than ring-dove's cooings.  
How silent comes the water round that bend ;  
Not the minutest whisper does it send  
To the o'erhanging sallows : blades of grass  
Slowly across the chequer'd shadows pass.  
Why, you might read two sonnets, ere they reach  
To where the hurrying freshneses aye preach  
A natural sermon o'er their pebbly beds ;  
Where swarms of minnows show their little heads,  
Staying their wavy bodies 'gainst the streams,  
To taste the luxury of sunny beams  
Temper'd with coolness. How they ever wrestle  
With their own sweet delight, and ever nestle  
Their silver bellies on the pebbly sand.  
If you but scantily hold out the hand,  
That very instant not one will remain ;  
But turn your eye, and they are there again.  
The ripples seem right glad to reach those cresses,  
And cool themselves among the em'rald tresses ;  
The while they cool themselves, they freshness give,  
And moisture, that the bowery green may live :  
So keeping up an interchange of favours,  
Like good men in the truth of their behaviours.  
Sometimes goldfinches one by one will drop

**PART I** From low hung branches ; little space they stop ;  
I But sip, and twitter, and their feathers sleek ;  
Then off at once, as in a wanton freak :  
Or perhaps, to show their black, and golden wings,  
Pausing upon their yellow flutterings.  
Were I in such a place, I sure should pray  
That nought less sweet might call my thoughts away,  
Than the soft rustle of a maiden's gown  
Fanning away the dandelion's down ;  
Than the light music of her nimble toes  
Patting against the sorrel as she goes.  
How she would start, and blush, thus to be caught  
Playing in all her innocence of thought.  
O let me lead her gently o'er the brook,  
Watch her half-smiling lips, and downward look ;  
O let me for one moment touch her wrist ;  
Let me one moment to her breathing list ;  
And as she leaves me, may she often turn  
Her fair eyes looking through her locks auburne.  
¶ What next ? A tuft of evening primroses,  
O'er which the mind may hover till it dozes ;  
O'er which it well might take a pleasant sleep,  
But that 'tis ever startled by the leap  
Of buds into ripe flowers ; or by the flitting  
Of diverse moths, that aye their rest are quitting ;  
Or by the moon lifting her silver rim  
Above a cloud, and with a gradual swim  
Coming into the blue with all her light.  
O Maker of sweet poets, dear delight

Of this fair world, and all its gentle livers ;  
Spangler of clouds, halo of crystal rivers,  
Mingler with leaves, and dew and tumbling streams,  
Closer of lovely eyes to lovely dreams,  
Lover of loneliness, and wandering,  
Of upcast eye, and tender pondering !  
Thee must I praise above all other glories  
That smile us on to tell delightful stories.  
For what has made the sage or poet write  
But the fair paradise of Nature's light ?  
In the calm grandeur of a sober line,  
We see the waving of the mountain pine ;  
And when a tale is beautifully staid,  
We feel the safety of a hawthorn glade :  
When it is moving on luxurious wings,  
The soul is lost in pleasant smotherings :  
Fair dewy roses brush against our faces,  
And flowering laurels spring from diamond vases ;  
O'er head we see the jasmine and sweet briar,  
And bloomy grapes laughing from green attire ;  
While at our feet, the voice of crystal bubbles  
Charms us at once away from all our troubles :  
So that we feel uplifted from the world,  
Walking upon the white clouds wreath'd and curl'd.  
So felt he, who first told how Psyche went  
On the smooth wind to realms of wonderment ;  
What Psyche felt, and Love, when their full lips  
First touch'd ; what amorous and fondling nips  
They gave each other's cheeks ; with all their sighs.

PART I And how they kist each other's tremulous eyes :

i

The silver lamp,—the ravishment—the wonder—  
The darkness,—loneliness,—the fearful thunder ;  
Their woes gone by, and both to heaven upflown,  
To bow for gratitude before Jove's throne.  
So did he feel, who pull'd the boughs aside,  
That we might look into a forest wide,  
To catch a glimpse of Fauns, and Dryades  
Coming with softest rustle through the trees ;  
And garlands woven of flowers wild, and sweet,  
Upheld on ivory wrists, or sporting feet :  
Telling us how fair trembling Syrinx fled  
Arcadian Pan, with such a fearful dread.  
Poor nymph,—poor Pan,—how he did weep to find  
Nought but a lovely sighing of the wind  
Along the reedy stream ; a half-heard strain,  
Full of sweet desolation—balmy pain.

¶ What first inspired a bard of old to sing  
Narcissus pining o'er the untainted spring ?  
In some delicious ramble, he had found  
A little space, with boughs all woven round ;  
And in the midst of all, a clearer pool  
Than e'er reflected in its pleasant cool  
The blue sky, here, and there, serenely peeping  
Through tendril wreaths fantastically creeping.  
And on the bank a lonely flower he spied,  
A meek and forlorn flower, with nought of pride,  
Drooping its beauty o'er the watery clearness,  
To woo its own sad image into nearness :

Deaf to light Zephyrus it would not move ;  
But still would seem to droop, to pine, to love.  
So while the Poet stood in this sweet spot,  
Some fainter gleamings o'er his fancy shot ;  
Nor was it long ere he had told the tale  
Of young Narcissus, and sad Echo's bale.

¶ Where had he been, from whose warm head out-flew  
That sweetest of all songs, that ever new,  
That aye refreshing, pure deliciousness,  
Coming ever to bless  
The wanderer by moonlight ? to him bringing  
Shapes from the invisible world, unearthly singing  
From out the middle air, from flowery nests,  
And from the pillowy silkiness that rests  
Full in the speculation of the stars.

Ah ! surely he had burst our mortal bars,  
Into some wond'rous region he had gone,  
To search for thee, divine Endymion !

¶ He was a Poet, sure a lover too,  
Who stood on Latmus' top, what time there blew  
Soft breezes from the myrtle vale below ;  
And brought in faintness solemn, sweet, and slow  
A hymn from Dian's temple ; while upswelling,  
The incense went to her own starry dwelling.  
But though her face was clear as infant's eyes,  
Though she stood smiling o'er the sacrifice,  
The Poet wept at her so piteous fate,  
Wept that such beauty should be desolate :  
So in fine wrath some golden sounds he won,

PART I And gave meek Cynthia her Endymion.

i ¶ Queen of the wide air ; thou most lovely queen  
Of all the brightness that mine eyes have seen !  
As thou exceedest all things in thy shine,  
So every tale, does this sweet tale of thine.  
O for three words of honey, that I might  
Tell but one wonder of thy bridal night !  
¶ Where distant ships do seem to show their keels,  
Phœbus awhile delay'd his mighty wheels,  
And turn'd to smile upon thy bashful eyes,  
Ere he his unseen pomp would solemnize.  
The evening weather was so bright, and clear,  
That men of health were of unusual cheer ;  
Stepping like Homer at the trumpet's call,  
Or young Apollo on the pedestal :  
And lovely women were as fair and warm  
As Venus looking sideways in alarm.  
The breezes were ethereal, and pure,  
And crept through half-closed lattices to cure  
The languid sick ; it cool'd their fever'd sleep,  
And soothed them into slumbers full and deep.  
Soon they awoke clear eyed : nor burnt with thirsting,  
Nor with hot fingers, nor with temples bursting :  
And springing up, they met the wondering sight  
Of their dear friends, nigh foolish with delight ;  
Who feel their arms, and breasts, and kiss, and stare,  
And on their placid foreheads part the hair.  
Young men and maidens at each other gaz'd  
With hands held back, and motionless, amazed

To see the brightness in each other's eyes ;  
And so they stood, fill'd with a sweet surprise,  
Until their tongues were loos'd in poesy.  
Therefore no lover did of anguish die :  
But the soft numbers, in that moment spoken,  
Made silken ties, that never may be broken.  
Cynthia ! I cannot tell the greater blisses,  
That follow'd thine, and thy dear shepherd's kisses :  
Was there a Poet born ?—but now no more,  
My wandering spirit must no further soar.

**PART I** LO ! I must tell a tale of chivalry ;

ii

For large white plumes are dancing in mine eye.

Not like the formal crest of latter days : |

But bending in a thousand graceful ways ;

So graceful, that it seems no mortal hand,

Or e'en the touch of Archimago's wand,

Could charm them into such an attitude.

We must think rather, that in playful mood

Some mountain breeze had turn'd its chief delight

To show this wonder of its gentle might.

Lo ! I must tell a tale of chivalry ;

For while I muse, the lance points slantingly

Athwart the morning air : some lady sweet,

Who cannot feel for cold her tender feet,

From the worn top of some old battlement

Hails it with tears, her stout defender sent :

And from her own pure self no joy dissembling,

Wraps round her ample robe with happy trembling.

Sometimes, when the good Knight his rest would take,

It is reflected, clearly, in a lake,

With the young aspen boughs, 'gainst which it rests,

And th' half seen mossiness of linnets' nests.

Ah ! shall I ever tell its cruelty,

When the fire flashes from a warrior's eye,

And his tremendous hand is grasping it,

And his dark brow for very wrath is knit ?

Or when his spirit, with more calm intent,

Leaps to the honors of a tournament,

And makes the gazers round about the ring

Stare at the grandeur of the balancing ?  
No, no ! this is far off :—then how shall I  
Revive the dying tones of minstrelsy,  
Which linger yet about lone gothic arches,  
In dark green ivy, and among wild larches ?  
How sing the splendour of the revelries,  
When butts of wine are drunk off to the lees ?  
And that bright lance, against the fretted wall,  
Beneath the shade of stately banneral,  
Is slung with shining cuirass, sword, and shield ?  
Where ye may see a spur in bloody field.  
Light-footed damsels move with gentle paces  
Round the wide hall, and show their happy faces ;  
Or stand in courtly talk by fives and sevens :  
Like those fair stars that twinkle in the heavens.  
Yet must I tell a tale of chivalry :  
Or wherefore comes that steed so proudly by ?  
Wherefore more proudly does the gentle knight  
Rein in the swelling of his ample might ?

¶ Spenser ! thy brows are arched, open, kind,  
And come like a clear sun-rise to my mind ;  
And always does my heart with pleasure dance,  
When I think on thy noble countenance :  
Where never yet was aught more earthly seen  
Than the pure freshness of thy laurels green.  
Therefore, great bard, I not so fearfully  
Call on thy gentle spirit to hover nigh  
My daring steps : or if thy tender care,

PART I  
ii

PART I Thus startles unaware,

ii Be jealous that the foot of other wight  
Should madly follow that bright path of light  
Trac'd by thy lov'd Libertas ; he will speak,  
And tell thee that my prayer is very meek ;  
That I will follow with due reverence,  
And start with awe at mine own strange pretence.  
Him thou wilt hear ; so I will rest in hope  
To see wide plains, fair trees, and lawny slope :  
The morn, the eve, the light, the shade, the flowers ;  
Clear streams, smooth lakes, and overlooking towers.

WHAT is more gentle than a wind in summer ?  
 What is more soothing than the pretty hummer  
 That stays one moment in an open flower,  
 And buzzes cheerily from bower to bower ?  
 What is more tranquil than a musk-rose blowing  
 In a green island, far from all men's knowing ?  
 More healthful than the leafiness of dales ?  
 More secret than a nest of nightingales ?  
 More serene than Cordelia's countenance ?  
 More full of visions than a high romance ?  
 What, but thee, Sleep ? Soft closer of our eyes !  
 Low murmurer of tender lullabies !  
 Light hoverer around our happy pillows !  
 Wreather of poppy buds, and weeping willows !  
 Silent entangler of a beauty's tresses !  
 Most happy listener ! when the morning blesses  
 Thee for enlivening all the cheerful eyes  
 That glance so brightly at the new sun-rise.  
 ¶ But what is higher beyond thought than thee ?  
 Fresher than berries of a mountain tree ?  
 More strange, more beautiful, more smooth, more regal,  
 Than wings of swans, than doves, than dim-seen eagle ?  
 What is it ? And to what shall I compare it ?  
 It has a glory, and nought else can share it :  
 The thought thereof is awful, sweet, and holy,  
 Chasing away all worldliness and folly,  
 Coming sometimes like fearful claps of thunder,  
 Or the low rumblings earth's regions under ;  
 And sometimes like a gentle whispering

PART I

iii

Of all the secrets of some wond'rous thing  
That breathes about us in the vacant air ;  
So that we look around with prying stare,  
Perhaps to see shapes of light, aerial limning ;  
And catch soft floatings from a faint-heard hymning ;  
To see the laurel wreath, on high suspended,  
That is to crown our name when life is ended.  
Sometimes it gives a glory to the voice,  
And from the heart up-springs, rejoice ! rejoice !  
Sounds which will reach the Framer of all things,  
And die away in ardent mutterings.

¶ No one who once the glorious sun has seen,  
And all the clouds, and felt his bosom clean  
For his great Maker's presence, but must know  
What 'tis I mean, and feel his being glow :  
Therefore no insult will I give his spirit  
By telling what he sees from native merit.

¶ O Poesy ! for thee I hold my pen,  
That am not yet a glorious denizen  
Of thy wide heaven—Should I rather kneel  
Upon some mountain-top until I feel  
A glowing splendour round about me hung,  
And echo back the voice of thine own tongue ?  
O Poesy ! for thee I grasp my pen,  
That am not yet a glorious denizen  
Of thy wide heaven ; yet, to my ardent prayer,  
Yield from thy sanctuary some clear air,  
Smooth'd for intoxication by the breath  
Of flowering bays, that I may die a death

Of luxury, and my young spirit follow  
The morning sun-beams to the great Apollo  
Like a fresh sacrifice : or, if I can bear  
The o'erwhelming sweets, 'twill bring to me the fair  
Visions of all places : a bowery nook  
Will be elysium—an eternal book  
Whence I may copy many a lovely saying  
About the leaves, and flowers—about the playing  
Of nymphs in woods, and fountains ; and the shade  
Keeping a silence round a sleeping maid ;  
And many a verse from so strange influence  
That we must ever wonder how, and whence  
It came. Also imaginings will hover  
Round my fire-side, and haply there discover  
Vistas of solemn beauty, where I'd wander  
In happy silence, like the clear Meander  
Through its lone vales ; and where I found a spot  
Of awfuller shade, or an enchanted grot,  
Or a green hill o'erspread with chequer'd dress  
Of flowers, and fearful from its loveliness,  
Write on my tablets all that was permitted,  
All that was for our human senses fitted.  
Then the events of this wide world I'd seize  
Like a strong giant, and my spirit teaze  
Till at its shoulders it should proudly see  
Wings to find out an immortality.  
¶ Stop and consider ! life is but a day ;  
A fragile dew-drop on its perilous way  
From a tree's summit ; a poor Indian's sleep

**PART I** While his boat hastens to the monstrous steep

iii Of Montmorenci. Why so sad a moan ?  
Life is the rose's hope while yet unblown ;  
The reading of an ever-changing tale ;  
The light uplifting of a maiden's veil ;  
A pigeon tumbling in clear summer air ;  
A laughing school-boy, without grief or care,  
Riding the springy branches of an elm.  
¶ O for ten years, that I may overwhelm  
Myself in poesy ; so I may do the deed  
That my own soul has to itself decreed.  
Then will I pass the countries that I see  
In long perspective, and continually  
Taste their pure fountains. First the realm I'll pass  
Of Flora, and old Pan : sleep in the grass,  
Feed upon apples red, and strawberries,  
And choose each pleasure that my fancy sees ;  
Catch the white-handed nymphs in shady places,  
To woo sweet kisses from averted faces,—  
Play with their fingers, touch their shoulders white  
Into a pretty shrinking with a bite  
As hard as lips can make it : till agreed,  
A lovely tale of human life we'll read.  
And one will teach a tame dove how it best  
May fan the cool air gently o'er my rest ;  
Another, bending o'er her nimble tread,  
Will set a green robe floating round her head,  
And still will dance with ever varied ease,  
Smiling upon the flowers and the trees :

Another will entice me on, and on,  
Through almond blossoms and rich cinnamon ;  
Till in the bosom of a leafy world  
We rest in silence, like two gems upcurl'd  
In the recesses of a pearly shell.

¶ And can I ever bid these joys farewell ?  
Yes, I must pass them for a nobler life,  
Where I may find the agonies, the strife  
Of human hearts : for lo ! I see afar,  
O'er sailing the blue cragginess, a car  
And steeds with streamy manes—the charioteer  
Looks out upon the winds with glorious fear :  
And now the numerous tramplings quiver lightly  
Along a huge cloud's ridge ; and now with sprightly  
Wheel downward come they into fresher skies,  
Tipt round with silver from the sun's bright eyes.  
Still downward with capricious whirl they glide ;  
And now I see them on a green hill's side  
In breezy rest among the nodding stalks.  
The charioteer with wondrous gesture talks  
To the trees and mountains ; and there soon appear  
Shapes of delight, of mystery, and fear,  
Passing along before a dusky space  
Made by some mighty oaks : as they would chase  
Some ever-fleeting music on they sweep.  
Lo ! how they murmur, laugh, and smile, and weep :  
Some with upholden hand and mouth severe ;  
Some with their faces muffled to the ear  
Between their arms ; some, clear in youthful bloom,

PART I    Go glad and smilingly athwart the gloom ;  
      iii    Some looking back, and some with upward gaze ;  
              Yes, thousands in a thousand different ways  
              Flit onward—now a lovely wreath of girls  
              Dancing their sleek hair into tangled curls ;  
              And now broad wings. Most awfully intent  
              The driver of those steeds is forward bent,  
              And seems to listen : O that I might know  
              All that he writes with such a hurrying glow.  
¶ The visions all are fled—the car is fled  
      Into the light of heaven, and in their stead  
              A sense of real things comes doubly strong,  
              And, like a muddy stream, would bear along  
              My soul to nothingness : but I will strive  
              Against all doubtings, and will keep alive  
              The thought of that same chariot, and the strange  
              Journey it went. ¶ Is there so small a range  
              In the present strength of manhood, that the high  
              Imagination cannot freely fly  
              As she was wont of old ? prepare her steeds,  
              Paw up against the light, and do strange deeds  
              Upon the clouds ? Has she not shown us all ?  
              From the clear space of ether, to the small  
              Breath of new buds unfolding ? From the meaning  
              Of Jove's large eye-brow, to the tender greening  
              Of April meadows ? Here her altar shone,  
              E'en in this isle ; and who could paragon  
              The fervid choir that lifted up a noise  
              Of harmony, to where it aye will poise

Its mighty self of convoluting sound,  
Huge as a planet, and like that roll round,  
Eternally around a dizzy void ?

Ay, in those days the Muses were nigh cloy'd  
With honors ; nor had any other care  
Than to sing out and soothe their wavy hair.

¶ Could all this be forgotten ? Yes, a schism  
Nurtured by foppery and barbarism  
Made great Apollo blush for this his land.

Men were thought wise who could not understand  
His glories : with a puling infant's force  
They sway'd about upon a rocking horse,

And thought it Pegasus. Ah dismal soul'd !  
The winds of heaven blew, the ocean roll'd  
Its gathering waves—ye felt it not. The blue

Bared its eternal bosom, and the dew  
Of summer nights collected still to make  
The morning precious : beauty was awake !

Why were ye not awake ? But ye were dead  
To things ye knew not of,—were closely wed  
To musty laws lined out with wretched rule

And compass vile : so that ye taught a school  
Of dolts to smoothe, inlay, and clip, and fit,  
Till, like the certain wands of Jacob's wit,

Their verses tallied. Easy was the task :

A thousand handicraftsmen wore the mask  
Of Poesy. Ill-fated, impious race !

That blasphemed the bright Lyrist to his face,  
And did not know it,—no, they went about,

**PART I** Holding a poor, decrepit standard out  
iii Mark'd with most flimsy mottos, and in large  
The name of one Boileau ! ¶ O ye whose charge  
It is to hover round our pleasant hills !  
Whose congregated majesty so fills  
My boundly reverence, that I cannot trace  
Your hallow'd names, in this unholy place,  
So near those common folk ; did not their shames  
Affright you ? Did our old lamenting Thames  
Delight you ? Did ye never cluster round  
Delicious Avon, with a mournful sound,  
And weep ? Or did ye wholly bid adieu  
To regions where no more the laurel grew ?  
Or did ye stay to give a welcoming  
To some lone spirits who could proudly sing  
Their youth away, and die ? 'Twas even so :  
But let me think away those times of woe :  
Now 'tis a fairer season ; ye have breathed  
Rich benefactions o'er us' ; ye have wreathed  
Fresh garlands : for sweet music has been heard  
In many places ;—some has been upstirr'd  
From out its crystal dwelling in a lake,  
By a swan's ebon bill ; from a thick brake,  
Nested and quiet in a valley mild,  
Bubbles a pipe ; fine sounds are floating wild  
About the earth : happy are ye and glad.  
¶ These things are doubtless : yet in truth we've had  
Strange thunders from the potency of song ;  
Mingled indeed with what is sweet and strong,

From majesty : but in clear truth the themes  
Are ugly clubs, the Poets' Polyphemes  
Disturbing the grand sea. A drainless shower  
Of light is poesy ; 'tis the supreme of power ;  
'Tis might half slumbering on its own right arm.  
The very archings of her eye-lids charm  
A thousand willing agents to obey,  
And still she governs with the mildest sway :  
But strength alone, though of the Muses born,  
Is like a fallen angel : trees uptorn,  
Darkness, and worms, and shrouds, and sepulchres  
Delight it ; for it feeds upon the burrs  
And thorns of life ; forgetting the great end  
Of poesy, that it should be a friend  
To soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts of man.

¶ Yet I rejoice : a myrtle fairer than  
E'er grew in Paphos, from the bitter weeds  
Lifts its sweet head into the air, and feeds  
A silent space with ever sprouting green.  
All tenderest birds there find a pleasant screen,  
Creep through the shade with jaunty fluttering,  
Nibble the little cupped flowers and sing.  
Then let us clear away the choking thorns  
From round its gentle stem ; let the young fawns,  
Yeaned in after times, when we are flown,  
Find a fresh sward beneath it, overgrown  
With simple flowers : let there nothing be  
More boisterous than a lover's bended knee ;  
Nought more ungentle than the placid look

PART I Of one who leans upon a closed book ;  
iii Nought more untrquil than the grassy slopes  
Between two hills. All hail delightful hopes !  
As she was wont, th' imagination  
Into most lovely labyrinths will be gone,  
And they shall be accounted poet kings  
Who simply tell the most heart-easing things.  
O may these joys be ripe before I die.  
¶ Will not some say that I presumptuously  
Have spoken ? that from hastening disgrace  
'Twere better far to hide my foolish face ?  
That whining boyhood should with reverence bow  
Ere the dread thunderbolt could reach me ? How !  
If I do hide myself, it sure shall be  
In the very fane, the light of Poesy :  
If I do fall, at least I will be laid  
Beneath the silence of a poplar shade ;  
And over me the grass shall be smooth shaven ;  
And there shall be a kind memorial graven.  
But off Despondence ! miserable bane !  
They should not know thee, who athirst to gain  
A noble end, are thirsty every hour.  
What though I am not wealthy in the dower  
Of spanning wisdom ; though I do not know  
The shiftings of the mighty winds that blow  
Hither and thither all the changing thoughts  
Of man : though no great minist'ring reason sorts  
Out the dark mysteries of human souls  
To clear conceiving : yet there ever rolls

A vast idea before me, and I glean  
Therefrom my liberty ; thence too I've seen  
The end and aim of Poesy. 'Tis clear  
As anything most true ; as that the year  
Is made of the four seasons—manifest  
As a large cross, some old cathedral's crest,  
Lifted to the white clouds. Therefore should I  
Be but the essence of deformity,  
A coward, did my very eye-lids wink  
At speaking out what I have dared to think.  
Ah ! rather let me like a madman run  
Over some precipice ; let the hot sun  
Melt my Dedalian wings, and drive me down  
Convuls'd and headlong ! Stay ! an inward frown  
Of conscience bids me be more calm awhile.  
An ocean dim, sprinkled with many an isle,  
Spreads awfully before me. How much toil !  
How many days ! what desperate turmoil !  
Ere I can have explored its widenesses.  
Ah, what a task ! upon my bended knees.  
I could unsay those—no, impossible !  
Impossible ! ¶ For sweet relief I'll dwell  
On humbler thoughts, and let this strange assay  
Begun in gentleness die so away.  
E'en now all tumult from my bosom fades :  
I turn full hearted to the friendly aids  
That smooth the path of honour ; brotherhood,  
And friendliness the nurse of mutual good.  
The hearty grasp that sends a pleasant sonnet

**PART I** Into the brain ere one can think upon it ;  
iii The silence when some rhymes are coming out ;  
And when they're come, the very pleasant rout ;  
The message certain to be done to-morrow.  
'Tis perhaps as well that it should be to borrow  
Some precious book from out its snug retreat,  
To cluster round it when we next shall meet.  
Scarce can I scribble on ; for lovely airs  
Are fluttering round the room like doves in pairs ;  
Many delights of that glad day recalling,  
When first my senses caught their tender falling.  
And with these airs come forms of elegance  
Stooping their shoulders o'er a horse's prance,  
Careless, and grand—fingers soft and round  
Parting luxuriant curls ;—and the swift bound  
Of Bacchus from his chariot, when his eye  
Made Ariadne's cheek look blushingly.  
Thus I remember all the pleasant flow  
Of words at opening a portfolio.  
¶ Things such as these are ever harbingers  
To trains of peaceful images : the stirs  
Of a swan's neck unseen among the rushes :  
A linnet starting all about the bushes :  
A butterfly, with golden wings broad parted,  
Nestling a rose, convuls'd as though it smarted  
With over pleasure—many, many more,  
Might I indulge at large in all my store  
Of luxuries : yet I must not forget  
Sleep, quiet with his poppy coronet :

For what there may be worthy in these rhymes  
I partly owe to him : and thus, the chimes  
Of friendly voices had just given place  
To as sweet a silence, when I 'gan retrace  
The pleasant day, upon a couch at ease.  
It was a poet's house who keeps the keys  
Of pleasure's temple. Round about were hung  
The glorious features of the bards who sung  
In other ages—cold and sacred busts  
Smiled at each other. Happy he who trusts  
To clear Futurity his darling fame !  
Then there were fauns and satyrs taking aim  
At swelling apples with a frisky leap  
And reaching fingers 'mid a luscious heap  
Of vine leaves. Then there rose to view a fane  
Of liny marble, and thereto a train  
Of nymphs approaching fairly o'er the sward :  
One, loveliest, holding her white hand toward  
The dazzling sun-rise : two sisters sweet  
Bending their graceful figures till they meet  
Over the trippings of a little child :  
And some are hearing, eagerly, the wild  
Thrilling liquidity of dewy piping.  
See, in another picture, nymphs are wiping  
Cherishingly Diana's timorous limbs ;  
A fold of lawny mantle dabbling swims  
At the bath's edge, and keeps a gentle motion  
With the subsiding crystal : as when ocean  
Heaves calmly its broad swelling smoothness o'er

PART I

Its rocky marge, and balances once more

iii The patient weeds ; that now unshent by foam  
Feel about their undulating home.

¶ Sappho's meek head was there half smiling down  
At nothing ; just as though the earnest frown  
Of over thinking had that moment gone  
From off her brow, and left her all alone.

¶ Great Alfred's too, with anxious, pitying eyes,  
As if he always listen'd to the sighs  
Of the goaded world : and Kosciusko's worn  
By horrid suffrance—mighty forlorn.

¶ Petrarch, outstepping from the shady green,  
Starts at the sight of Laura ; nor can wean  
His eyes from her sweet face. Most happy they !  
For over them was seen a free display  
Of out-spread wings, and from between them shone  
The face of Poesy : from off her throne  
She overlook'd things that I scarce could tell.  
The very sense of where I was might well  
Keep Sleep aloof : but more than that there came  
Thought after thought to nourish up the flame  
Within my breast ; so that the morning light  
Surprised me even from a sleepless night ;  
And up I rose refresh'd, and glad, and gay,  
Resolving to begin that very day  
These lines ; and howsoever they be done,  
I leave them as a father does his son.

PART II. TALES (WITH INCLUDED  
LYRICS)

# I

**PART II FAIR** Isabel, poor simple Isabel !

i       Lorenzo, a young palmer in Love's eye !  
They could not in the self-same mansion dwell  
Without some stir of heart, some malady ;  
They could not sit at meals but feel how well  
It soothed each to be the other by ;  
They could not, sure, beneath the same roof sleep  
But to each other dream, and nightly weep.

# II

With every morn their love grew tenderer,  
With every eve deeper and tenderer still ;  
He might not in house, field, or garden stir,  
But her full shape would all his seeing fill ;  
And his continual voice was pleasanter  
To her, than noise of trees or hidden rill ;  
Her lute-string gave an echo of his name,  
She spoilt her half-done broidery with the same.

# III

He knew whose gentle hand was at the latch,  
Before the door had given her to his eyes ;  
And from her chamber-window he would catch  
Her beauty farther than the falcon spies ;  
And constant as her vespers would he watch,  
Because her face was turn'd to the same skies ;  
And with sickly longing all the night outwear,  
To hear her morning-step upon the stair.

## IV

A whole long month of May in this sad plight  
Made their cheeks paler by the break of June :  
To-morrow will I bow to my delight,  
To-morrow will I ask my lady's boon.  
O may I never see another night,  
Lorenzo, if thy lips breathe not love's tune.  
So spake they to their pillows ; but, alas,  
Honeyless days and days did he let pass ;

## PART II

i

## V

Until sweet Isabella's untouched cheek  
Fell sick within the rose's just domain,  
Fell thin as a young mother's, who doth seek  
By every lull to cool her infant's pain :  
How ill she is, said he, I may not speak,  
And yet I will, and tell my love all plain :  
If looks speak love-laws, I will drink her tears,  
And at the least 'twill startle off her cares.

## VI

So said he one fair morning, and all day  
His heart beat awfully against his side ;  
And to his heart he inwardly did pray  
For power to speak ; but still the ruddy tide  
Stifled his voice, and pulsed resolve away—  
Fever'd his high conceit of such a bride,  
Yet brought him to the meekness of a child  
Alas ! when passion is both meek and wild !

## VII

PART II So once more he had wak'd and anguished  
i A dreary night of love and misery,  
If Isabel's quick eye had not been wed  
To every symbol on his forehead high ;  
She saw it waxing very pale and dead,  
And straight all flush'd ; so, lisped tenderly,  
Lorenzo !—here she ceased her timid quest,  
But in her tone and look he read the rest.

## VIII

O Isabella, I can half perceive  
That I may speak my grief into thine ear ;  
If thou didst ever anything believe,  
Believe how I love thee, believe how near  
My soul is to its doom : I would not grieve  
Thy hand by unwelcome pressing, would not fear  
Thine eyes by gazing ; but I cannot live  
Another night, and not my passion shrive.

## IX

Love ! thou art leading me from wintry cold,  
Lady ! thou leadest me to summer clime,  
And I must taste the blossoms that unfold  
In its ripe warmth this gracious morning time.  
So said, his erewhile timid lips grew bold,  
And poesied with hers in dewy rhyme :  
Great bliss was with them, and great happiness  
Grew, like a lusty flower in June's caress.

## X

## PART II

i

Parting they seem'd to tread upon the air,  
Twin roses by the zephyr blown apart  
Only to meet again more close, and share  
The inward fragrance of each other's heart.  
She, to her chamber gone, a ditty fair  
Sang, of delicious love and honey'd dart ;  
He with light steps went up a western hill,  
And bade the sun farewell, and joy'd his fill.

## XI

All close they met again, before the dusk  
Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,  
All close they met, all eves, before the dusk  
Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,  
Close in a bower of hyacinth and musk,  
Unknown of any, free from whispering tale..  
Ah ! better had it been for ever so,  
Than idle ears should pleasure in their woe.

## XII

Were they unhappy then ?—It cannot be—  
Too many tears for lovers have been shed,  
Too many sighs give we to them in fee,  
Too much of pity after they are dead,  
Too many doleful stories do we see,  
Whose matter in bright gold were best be read ;  
Except in such a page where Theseus' spouse  
Over the pathless waves towards him bows.

### XIII

**PART II** But, for the general award of love,  
i The little sweet doth kill much bitterness ;  
Though Dido silent is in under-grove,  
And Isabella's was a great distress,  
Though young Lorenzo in warm Indian clove  
Was not embalm'd. this truth is not the less—  
Even bees, the little almsmen of spring-bowers,  
Know there is richest juice in poison-flowers.

### XIV

With her two brothers this fair lady dwelt,  
Enriched from ancestral merchandize,  
And for them many a weary hand did swelt  
In torched mines and noisy factories,  
And many once proud-quiver'd loins did melt  
In blood from stinging whip ;—with hollow eyes  
Many all day in dazzling river stood,  
To take the rich-ored driftings of the flood.

### XV

For them the Ceylon diver held his breath,  
And went all naked to the hungry shark ;  
For them his ears gushed blood ; for them in death  
The seal on the cold ice with piteous bark  
Lay full of darts ; for them alone did seethe  
A thousand men in troubles wide and dark :  
Half-ignorant, they turn'd an easy wheel,  
That set sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel.

## XVI

Why were they proud ? Because their marble founts  
Gush'd with more pride than do a wretch's tears ?

Why were they proud ? Because fair orange-mounts  
Were of more soft ascent than lazarus stairs ?

Why were they proud ? Because red-lin'd accounts  
Were richer than the songs of Grecian years ?

Why were they proud ? again we ask aloud,

Why in the name of Glory were they proud ?

PART II  
i

## XVII

Yet were these Florentines as self-retired  
In hungry pride and gainful cowardice,  
As two close Hebrews in that land inspired,  
Paled in and vineyarded from beggar-spies ;  
The hawks of ship-mast forests—the untired  
And pannier'd mules for ducats and old lies—  
Quick cat's-paws on the generous stray-away—  
Great wits in Spanish, Tuscan, and Malay.

## XVIII

How was it these same ledger-men could spy  
Fair Isabella in her downy nest ?

How could they find out in Lorenzo's eye  
A straying from his toil ? Hot Egypt's pest  
Into their vision covetous and sly !

How could these money-bags see east and west ?  
Yet so they did—and every dealer fair  
Must see behind, as doth the hunted hare.

## XIX

**PART II** O eloquent and famed Boccaccio !

i        Of thee we now should ask forgiving boon,  
And of thy spicy myrtles as they blow,  
      And of thy roses amorous of the moon,  
And of thy lilies, that do paler grow  
      Now they can no more hear thy ghittern's tune,  
For venturing syllables that ill beseem  
The quiet glooms of such a piteous theme.

## XX

Grant thou a pardon here, and then the tale

      Shall move on soberly, as it is meet ;  
There is no other crime, no mad assail  
      To make old prose in modern rhyme more sweet :  
But it is done—succeed the verse or fail—  
      To honour thee, and thy gone spirit greet ;  
To stead thee as a verse in English tongue,  
An echo of thee in the north-wind sung.

## XXI

These brethren having found by many signs

      What love Lorenzo for their sister had,  
And how she lov'd him too, each unconfin'd  
      His bitter thoughts to other, well nigh mad  
That he, the servant of their trade designs,  
      Should in their sister's love be blithe and glad,  
When 'twas their plan to coax her by degrees  
To some high noble and his olive-trees.

## XXII

And many a jealous conference had they,  
And many times they bit their lips alone,  
Before they fix'd upon a surest way  
To make the youngster for his crime atone ;  
And at the last, these men of cruel clay  
Cut Mercy with a sharp knife to the bone ;  
For they resolved in some forest dim  
To kill Lorenzo, and there bury him.

PART II  
i

## XXIII

So on a pleasant morning, as he leant  
Into the sun-rise, o'er the balustrade  
Of the garden-terrace, towards him they bent  
Their footing through the dews ; and to him said,  
You seem there in the quiet of content,  
Lorenzo, and we are most loth to invade  
Calm speculation ; but if you are wise,  
Bestride your steed while cold is in the skies.

## XXIV

To-day we purpose, aye, this hour we mount  
To spur three leagues towards the Apennine ;  
Come down, we pray thee, ere the hot sun count  
His dewy rosary on the eglantine.  
Lorenzo, courteously as he was wont,  
Bow'd a fair greeting to these serpents' whine ;  
And went in haste, to get in readiness,  
With belt, and spur, and bracing huntsman's dress.

## XXV

**PART II** And as he to the court-yard pass'd along,  
i        Each third step did he pause, and listen'd oft  
If he could hear his lady's matin-song,  
Or the light whisper of her footstep soft ;  
And as he thus over his passion hung,  
He heard a laugh full musical aloft ;  
When, looking up, he saw her features bright  
Smile through an in-door lattice, all delight.

## XXVI

Love, Isabel ! said he, I was in pain  
Lest I should miss to bid thee a good morrow :  
Ah ! what if I should lose thee, when so fain  
I am to stifle all the heavy sorrow  
Of a poor three hours' absence ? but we'll gain  
Out of the amorous dark what day doth borrow.  
Good bye ! I'll soon be back.—Good bye ! said she :  
And as he went she chanted merrily.

## XXVII

So the two brothers and their murder'd man  
Rode past fair Florence, to where Arno's stream  
Gurgles through straiten'd banks, and still doth fan  
Itself with dancing bulrush, and the bream  
Keeps head against the freshets. Sick and wan  
The brothers' faces in the ford did seem,  
Lorenzo's flush with love.—They pass'd the water  
Into a forest quiet for the slaughter.

## XXVIII

There was Lorenzo slain and buried in,  
There in that forest did his great love cease ;  
Ah ! when a soul doth thus his freedom win,  
It aches in loneliness—is ill at peace  
As the break-covert blood-hounds of such sin :  
They dipp'd their swords in the water, and did tease  
Their horses homeward, with convulsed spur,  
Each richer by his being a murderer.

## PART II

i

## XXIX

They told their sister how, with sudden speed,  
Lorenzo had ta'en ship for foreign lands,  
Because of some great urgency and need  
In their affairs, requiring trusty hands.  
Poor Girl ! put on thy stifling widow's weed,  
And 'scape at once from Hope's accursed bands ;  
To-day thou wilt not see him, nor to-morrow,  
And the next day will be a day of sorrow.

## XXX

She weeps alone for pleasures not to be ;  
Sorely she wept until the night came on,  
And then, instead of love, O misery !  
She brooded o'er the luxury alone :  
His image in the dark she seemed to see,  
And to the silence made a gentle moan,  
Spreading her perfect arms upon the air,  
And on her couch low murmuring, Where ? O where ?

### XXXI

**PART II** But Selfishness, Love's cousin, held not long  
i Its fiery vigil in her single breast ;  
She fretted for the golden hour, and hung  
Upon the time with feverish unrest—  
Not long—for soon into her heart a throng  
Of higher occupants, a richer zest,  
Came tragic ; passion not to be subdued,  
And sorrow for her love in travels rude.

### XXXII

In the mid days of autumn, on their eves  
The breath of Winter comes from far away,  
And the sick west continually bereaves  
Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay  
Of death among the bushes and the leaves,  
To make all bare before he dares to stray  
From his north cavern. So sweet Isabel  
By gradual decay from beauty fell,

### XXXIII

Because Lorenzo came not. Oftentimes  
She ask'd her brothers, with an eye all pale,  
Striving to be itself, what dungeon climes  
Could keep him off so long ? They spake a tale  
Time after time, to quiet her. Their crimes  
Came on them, like a smoke from Hinnom's vale ;  
And every night in dreams they groan'd aloud,  
To see their sister in her snowy shroud.

### XXXIV

And she had died in drowsy ignorance,  
But for a thing more deadly dark than all ;  
It came like a fierce potion, drunk by chance,  
Which saves a sick man from the feather'd pall  
For some few gasping moments ; like a lance,  
Waking an Indian from his cloudy hall  
With cruel pierce, and bringing him again  
Sense of the gnawing fire at heart and brain.

PART II

i

### XXXV

It was a vision.—In the drowsy gloom,  
The dull of midnight, at her couch's foot  
Lorenzo stood, and wept : the forest tomb  
Had marr'd his glossy hair, which once could shoot  
Lustre into the sun, and put cold doom  
Upon his lips, and taken the soft lute  
From his lorn voice, and past his loamed ears  
Had made a miry channel for his tears.

### XXXVI

Strange sound it was, when the pale shadow spake ;  
For there was striving, in its piteous tongue,  
To speak as when on earth it was awake,  
And Isabella on its music hung :  
Languor there was in it, and tremulous shake,  
As in a palsied Druid's harp unstrung ;  
And through it moan'd a ghostly under-song,  
Like hoarse night-gusts sepulchral briars among.

### XXXVII

**PART II** Its eyes, though wild, were still all dewy bright  
i           With love, and kept all phantom fear aloof  
From the poor girl by magic of their light,  
The while it did unthread the horrid woof  
Of the late darken'd time,—the murderous spite  
Of pride and avarice,—the dark pine roof  
In the forest,—and the sodden turfed dell,  
Where, without any word, from stabs he fell.

### XXXVIII

Saying moreover, Isabel, my sweet !  
Red whortle-berries droop above my head,  
And a large flint-stone weighs upon my feet ;  
Around me beeches and high chestnuts shed  
Their leaves and prickly nuts ; a sheep-fold bleat  
Comes from beyond the river to my bed :  
Go, shed one tear upon my heather-bloom,  
And it shall comfort me within the tomb.

### XXXIX

I am a shadow now, alas ! alas !  
Upon the skirts of human-nature dwelling  
Alone : I chant alone the holy mass,  
While little sounds of life are round me knelling.  
And glossy bees at noon do fieldward pass,  
And many a chapel bell the hour is telling,  
Paining me through : those sounds grow strange to me,  
And thou art distant in Humanity.

## XL

I know what was, I feel full well what is,  
And I should rage, if spirits could go mad ;  
Though I forget the taste of earthly bliss,  
That paleness warms my grave, as though I had  
A Seraph chosen from the bright abyss  
To be my spouse : thy paleness makes me glad ;  
Thy beauty grows upon me, and I feel  
A greater love through all my essence steal.

## PART II

i

## XLI

The Spirit mourn'd Adieu !—dissolved, and left  
The atom darkness in a slow turmoil ;  
As when of healthful midnight sleep bereft,  
Thinking on rugged hours and fruitless toil,  
We put our eyes into a pillowy cleft,  
And see the spangly gloom froth up and boil :  
It made sad Isabella's eyelids ache,  
And in the dawn she started up awake ;

## XLII

Ha ! ha ! said she, I knew not this hard life,  
I thought the worst was simple misery ;  
I thought some Fate with pleasure or with strife  
Portion'd us—happy days, or else to die ;  
But there is crime—a brother's bloody knife !  
Sweet Spirit, thou has school'd my infancy :  
I'll visit thee for this, and kiss thine eyes,  
And greet thee morn and even in the skies.

### XLIII

**PART II** When the full morning came, she had devised  
i How she might secret to the forest hie ;  
How she might find the clay, so dearly prized,  
And sing to it one latest lullaby ;  
How her short absence might be unsurmised,  
While she the inmost of the dream would try.  
Resolv'd, she took with her an aged nurse,  
And went into that dismal forest-hearse.

### XLIV

See, as they creep along the river side,  
How she doth whisper to that aged Dame,  
And, after looking round the champaign wide,  
Shows her a knife.—What feverous hectic flame  
Burns in thee, child ?—What good can thee betide,  
That thou shouldst smile again ?—The evening came,  
And they had found Lorenzo's earthy bed ;  
The flint was there, the berries at his head.

### XLV

Who hath not loiter'd in a green church-yard,  
And let his spirit, like a demon-mole,  
Work through the clayey soil and gravel hard,  
To see skull, coffin'd bones, and funeral stole ;  
Pitying each form that hungry Death hath marr'd,  
And filling it once more with human soul ?  
Ah ! this is holiday to what was felt  
When Isabella by Lorenzo knelt.

## XLVI

She gazed into the fresh-thrown mould, as though  
One glance did fully all its secrets tell ;  
Clearly she saw, as other eyes would know  
Pale limbs at bottom of a crystal well ;  
Upon the murderous spot she seem'd to grow,  
Like to a native lily of the dell :  
Then with her knife, all sudden, she began  
To dig more fervently than misers can.

## PART II

i

## XLVII

Soon she turn'd up a soil'd glove, whereon  
Her silk had play'd in purple phantasies ;  
She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than stone,  
And put it in her bosom, where it dries  
And freezes utterly unto the bone  
Those dainties made to still an infant's cries :  
Then 'gan she work again ; nor stayed her care,  
But to throw back at times her veiling hair.

## XLVIII

That old nurse stood beside her wondering,  
Until her heart felt pity to the core  
At sight of such a dismal labouring,  
And so she kneeled, with her locks all hoar,  
And put her lean hands to the horrid thing :  
Three hours they labour'd at this travail sore ;  
At last they felt the kernel of the grave,  
And Isabella did not stamp and rave.

## XLIX

PART II Ah ! wherefore all this wormy circumstance ?

i Why linger at the yawning tomb so long ?

O for the gentleness of old Romance,

The simple plaining of a minstrel's song !

Fair reader, at the old tale take a glance,

For here, in truth, it does not well belong

To speak :—O turn thee to the very tale,

And taste the music of that vision pale.

## L

With duller steel than the Perséan sword

They cut away no formless monster's head,

But one, whose gentleness did well accord

With death, as life. The ancient harps have said,

Love never dies, but lives, immortal Lord :

If Love impersonate was ever dead,

Pale Isabella kiss'd it, and low moan'd.

'Twas love ; cold,—dead indeed, but not dethroned.

## LI

In anxious secrecy they took it home,

And then the prize was all for Isabel :

She calm'd its wild hair with a golden comb,

And all around each eye's sepulchral cell

Pointed each fringed lash ; the smeared loam

With tears, as chilly as a dripping well,

She drench'd away :—and still she comb'd, and kept

Sighing all day—and still she kiss'd, and wept.

## LII

Then in a silken scarf,—sweet with the dews  
Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby,  
And divine liquids come with odorous ooze  
Through the cold serpent-pipe refreshfully,—  
She wrapp'd it up ; and for its tomb did choose  
A garden-pot, wherein she laid it by.  
And cover'd it with mould, and o'er it set  
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever wet.

PART II  
i

## LIII

And she forgot the stars, the moon, and sun,  
And she forgot the blue above the trees,  
And she forgot the dells where waters run,  
And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze ;  
She had no knowledge when the day was done,  
And the new morn she saw not : but in peace  
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,  
And moisten'd it with tears unto the core.

## LIV

And so she ever fed it with thin tears,  
Whence thick, and green, and beautiful it grew,  
So that it smelt more balmy than its peers  
Of Basil-tufts in Florence ; for it drew  
Nurture besides, and life, from human fears,  
From the fast mouldering head there shut from view :  
So that the jewel, safely casketed,  
Came forth, and in perfumed leaflets spread.

## LV

PART II O Melancholy, linger here awhile !

i O Music, Music, breathe despondingly !

O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle,

Unknown, Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh !

Spirits in grief, lift up your heads, and smile ;

Lift up your heads, sweet Spirits, heavily,  
And make a pale light in your cypress glooms,  
Tinting with silver wan your marble tombs.

## LVI

Moan hither, all ye syllables of woe,

From the deep throat of sad Melpomene !

Through bronzed lyre in tragic order go,

And touch the strings into a mystery ;

Sound mournfully upon the winds and low ;

For simple Isabel is soon to be

Among the dead : She withers, like a palm

Cut by an Indian for its juicy balm.

## LVII

O leave the palm to wither by itself ;

Let not quick Winter chill its dying hour !

It may not be—those Baalites of pelf,

Her brethren, noted the continual shower

From her dead eyes : and many a curious elf,

Among her kindred, wonder'd that such dower

Of youth and beauty should be thrown aside

By one mark'd out to be a Noble's bride.

## LVIII

And, furthermore, her brethren wonder'd much

Why she sat drooping by the Basil green,

And why it flourish'd, as by magic touch ;

Greatly they wonder'd what the thing might mean :

They could not surely give belief, that such

A very nothing would have power to wean

Her from her own fair youth, and pleasures gay,

And even remembrance of her love's delay.

## PART II

i

## LIX

Therefore they watch'd a time when they might sift

This hidden whim ; and long they watch'd in vain ;

For seldom did she go to chapel-shrift,

And seldom felt she any hunger-pain ;

And when she left, she hurried back, as swift

As bird on wing to breast its eggs again ;

And, patient as a hen-bird, sat her there

Beside her Basil, weeping through her hair.

## LX

Yet they contrived to steal the Basil-pot,

And to examine it in secret place :

The thing was vile with green and livid spot,

And yet they knew it was Lorenzo's face :

The guerdon of their murder they had got,

And so left Florence in a moment's space,

Never to turn again.—Away they went,

With blood upon their heads, to banishment.

## LXI

**PART II** O Melancholy, turn thine eyes away !

i O Music, Music, breathe despondingly !

O Echo, Echo, on some other day,

From isles, Lethean, sing to us—O sigh !

Spirits of grief, sing not your Well-a-way !

For Isabel, sweet Isabel, will die ;

Will die a death too lone and incomplete,

Now they have ta'en away her Basil sweet.

## LXII

Piteous she look'd on dead and senseless things,

Asking for her lost Basil amorously ;

And with melodious chuckle in the strings .

Of her lorn voice, she oftentimes would cry

After the Pilgrim in his wanderings,

To ask him where her Basil was ; and why

'Twas hid from her : For cruel 'tis, said she,

To steal my Basil-pot away from me.

## LXIII

And so she pined, and so she died forlorn,

Imploring for her Basil to the last.

No heart was there in Florence but did mourn

In pity of her love, so overcast.

And a sad ditty of this story born

[pass'd :

From mouth to mouth through all the country

Still is the burthen sung—O cruelty,

To steal my Basil-pot away from me !

## PART II

ii

PART II

iii

UPON a Sabbath-day it fell ;  
Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell,  
That call'd the folk to evening prayer ;  
The city streets were clean and fair  
From wholesome drench of April rains ;  
And, on the western window panes,  
The chilly sunset faintly told  
Of unmatur'd green vallies cold,  
Of the green thorny bloomless hedge,  
Of rivers new with spring-tide sedge,  
Of primroses by shelter'd rills,  
And daisies on the aguish hills.  
Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell :  
The silent streets were crowded well  
With staid and pious companies,  
Warm from their fire-side orat'ries ;  
And moving, with demurest air,  
To even-song, and vesper prayer.  
Each arched porch, and entry low,  
Was filled with patient folk and slow,  
With whispers hush, and shuffling feet,  
While play'd the organ loud and sweet.  
¶The bells had ceased, the prayers begun,  
And Bertha had not yet half done  
A curious volume, patch'd and torn,  
That all day long, from earliest morn,  
Had taken captive her two eyes,  
Among its golden broideries ;  
Perplex'd her with a thousand things,—

The stars of Heaven, and angels' wings,  
Martyrs in a fiery blaze,  
Azure saints and silver rays,  
Moses' breastplate, and the seven  
Candlesticks John saw in Heaven,  
The winged Lion of Saint Mark,  
And the Covenantal Ark,  
With its many mysteries,  
Cherubim and golden mice.

¶ Bertha was a maiden fair,  
Dwelling in the old Minster-square ;  
From her fire-side she could see,  
Sidelong, its rich antiquity,  
Far as the Bishop's garden-wall ;  
Where sycamores and elm-trees tall,  
Full-leaved, the forest had outstript,  
By no sharp north-wind ever nipt,  
So shelter'd by the mighty pile.  
Bertha arose, and read awhile,  
With forehead 'gainst the window-pane.  
Again she try'd, and then again,  
Until the dusk eve left her dark  
Upon the legend of Saint Mark.  
From plaited lawn-frill, fine and thin,  
She lifted up her soft warm chin,  
With aching neck and swimming eyes,  
And daz'd with saintly imageries.  
¶ All was gloom, and silent all,  
Save now and then the still foot-fall

PART II

iii

Of one returning homewards late,  
Past the echoing minster-gate.  
The clamorous daws, that all the day  
Above tree-tops and towers play,  
Pair by pair had gone to rest,  
Each in its ancient belfry-nest,  
Where asleep they fall betimes,  
To music of the drowsy chimes.  
¶ All was silent, all was gloom,  
Abroad and in the homely room :  
Down she sat, poor cheated soul !  
And struck a lamp from the dismal coal ;  
Lean'd forward, with bright drooping hair  
And slant book, full against the glare.  
Her shadow, in uneasy guise,  
Hover'd about, a giant size,  
On ceiling-beam and old oak chair,  
The parrot's cage, and panel square ;  
And the warm angled winter-screen,  
On which were many monsters seen,  
Call'd doves of Siam, Lima mice,  
And legless birds of Paradise,  
Macaw, and tender Avadavat,  
And silken-furr'd Angora cat.  
Untired she read, her shadow still  
Glower'd about, as it would fill  
The room with wildest forms and shades,  
As though some ghostly queen of spades  
Had come to mock behind her back,

And dance, and ruffle her garments black.  
Untir'd she read the legend page,  
Of holy Mark, from youth to age,  
On land, on sea, in pagan chains,  
Rejoicing for his many pains.  
Sometimes the learned eremite,  
With golden star, or dagger bright,  
Referr'd to pious poesies  
Written in smallest crow-quill size  
Beneath the text ; and thus the rhyme  
Was parcell'd out from time to time :  
Gif ye wol stonden hardie wight—  
Amiddes of the blackie night—  
Righte in the churche porch, pardie  
Ye wol behold a companie  
Approchen thee full dolourouse  
For sooth to sain from everich house  
Be it in city or village  
Wol come the Phantom and image  
Of ilka gent and ilka carle  
Whom coldè Deathè hath in parle  
And wol some day that very year  
Touchen with foule-venime spear  
And sadly do them all to die—  
Hem all shalt thou see verilie—  
And everichon shall by thee pass  
All who must die that year, Alas.  
—Als writith he of swevenis,  
Men han beforne they wake in bliss,

PART II  
iii

PART II

iii

Whanne that hir friendes thinke hem bound  
In crimped shroude farre under grounde ;  
And how a litling child mote be  
A saint er its nativitie,  
Gif that the modre (God her blesse !)  
Kepen in solitarinesse,  
And kissen devoute the holy croce—  
Of Goddis love, and Sathan's force,—  
He writhit ; and thinges many mo,  
Of swiche thinges I may not shew.  
Bot I must tellen verilie  
Somdel of Saintè Cicilie,  
And chieflie what he auctorethe  
Of Saintè Markis life and dethe :  
¶ At length her constant eyelids come  
Upon the fervent martyrdom ;  
Then lastly to his holy shrine,  
Exalt amid the tapers' shine  
At Venice,—

THE stranger lighted from his steed,  
And ere he spake a word,  
He seized my lady's lily hand,  
And kiss'd it all unheard.

The stranger walk'd into the hall,  
And ere he spake a word,  
He kiss'd my lady's cherry lips,  
And kiss'd 'em all unheard.

The stranger walk'd into the bower,—  
But my lady first did go,—  
Aye hand in hand into the bower,  
Where my lord's roses blow.

My lady's maid had a silken scarf,  
And a golden ring had she,  
And a kiss from the stranger as off he went  
Again on his fair palfrey.

PART II

v

ST AGNES' EVE—Ah, bitter chill it was !  
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold ;  
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,  
And silent was the flock in woolly fold :  
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told  
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,  
Like pious incense from a censer old,  
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,  
Past the sweet virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man ;  
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,  
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,  
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees :  
The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to freeze,  
Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails :  
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,  
He passeth by ; and his weak spirit fails  
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

Northward he turneth through a little door,  
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue  
Flatter'd to tears this aged man and poor ;  
But no—already had his deathbell rung ;  
The joys of all his life were said and sung :  
His was harsh penance on St Agnes' Eve :  
Another way he went, and soon among  
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,  
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft ; PART II  
And so it chanced, for many a door was wide,  
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,  
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide :  
The level chambers, ready with their pride,  
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests :  
The carved angels, ever eagle-eyed,  
Star'd, where upon their heads the cornice rests,  
With hair blown back, and wings put crosswise on their breasts.

At length burst in the argent revelry,  
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,  
Numerous as shadows haunting faerily  
The brain new stuff'd in youth with triumphs gay  
Of old romance. These let us wish away,  
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,  
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,  
On love, and wing'd St Agnes' saintly care,  
As she had heard old dames full many times declare.

They told her how, upon St Agnes' Eve,  
Young virgins might have visions of delight,  
And soft adorings from their loves receive  
Upon the honey'd middle of the night,  
If ceremonies due they did aright ;  
As, supperless to bed they must retire,  
And couch supine their beauties, lily white ;  
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require  
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

PART II

v

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline :  
The music, yearning like a God in pain,  
She scarcely heard : her maiden eyes divine,  
Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping train,  
Pass by—she heeded not at all : in vain  
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,  
And back retired, not cool'd by high disdain,  
But she saw not : her heart was otherwhere :  
She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

She danc'd along with vague, regardless eyes,  
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short :  
The hallow'd hour was near at hand : she sighs  
Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd resort  
Of whisperers in anger, or in sport ;  
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,  
Hoodwink'd with faery fancy ; all amort,  
Save to St Agnes and her lambs unshorn,  
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

So, purposing each moment to retire,  
She linger'd still. Meanwhile, across the moors,  
Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire  
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,  
Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he, and implores  
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,  
But for one moment in the tedious hours,  
That he might gaze and worship all unseen ;  
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in sooth such things  
have been.

He ventures in : let no buzz'd whisper tell :  
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords  
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous citadel :  
For him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,  
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,  
Whose very dogs would execrations howl  
Against his lineage : not one breast affords  
Him any mercy in that mansion foul,  
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

PART II  
v

Ah, happy chance ! the aged creature came,  
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,  
To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,  
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond  
The sound of merriment and chorus bland.  
He startled her : but soon she knew his face,  
And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied hand,  
Saying, Mercy, Porphyro ! hie thee from this place ;  
They are all here to-night, the whole blood-thirsty race.

Get hence ! get hence ! there's dwarfish Hildebrand ;  
He had a fever late, and in the fit  
He cursed thee and thine, both house and land :  
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit  
More tame for his grey hairs—Alas me ! flit !  
Flit like a ghost away.—Ah, Gossip dear,  
We're safe enough ; here in this arm-chair sit,  
And tell me how—Good Saints ! not here, not here ;  
Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy bier.

PART II

v

He follow'd through a lowly arched way,  
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume :  
And as she mutter'd Well-a—well-a-day !  
He found him in a little moonlight room,  
Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.  
Now tell me where is Madeline, said he,  
O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom  
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,  
When they St Agnes' wool are weaving piously.

St Agnes ! Ah ! it is St Agnes' Eve—  
Yet men will murder upon holy days :  
Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,  
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,  
To venture so : it fills me with amaze  
To see thee, Porphyro !—St Agnes' Eve !  
God's help ! my lady fair the conjuror plays  
This very night : good angels her deceive !  
But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle time to grieve.

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,  
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,  
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone  
Who keepeth clos'd a wondrous riddle-book,  
As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.  
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told  
His lady's purpose ; and he scarce could brook  
Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold,  
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

PART II

v

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,  
Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart  
Made purple riot : then doth he propose  
A stratagem, that makes the beldame start !  
A cruel man and impious thou art :  
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and dream  
Alone with her good angels, far apart  
From wicked men like thee. Go, go !—I deem  
Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst seem.

I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,  
Quoth Porphyro : O may I ne'er find grace  
When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer,  
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,  
Or look with ruffian passion in her face :  
Good Angela, believe me by these tears ;  
Or I will, even in a moment's space,  
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,  
And beard them, though they be more fang'd than  
wolves and bears.

Ah ! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul ?  
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard thing,  
Whose passing bell may ere the midnight toll ;  
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,  
Were never miss'd —Thus plaining, doth she bring  
A gentler speech from burning Porphyro ;  
So woeful, and of such deep sorrowing,  
That Angela gives promise she will do  
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

## PART II

v

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,  
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide  
Him in a closet, of such privacy  
That he might see her beauty unespied,  
And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,  
While legion'd faeries paced the coverlet,  
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.  
Never on such a night have lovers met,  
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

It shall be as thou wishest, said the Dame :  
All cates and dainties shall be stored there  
Quickly on this feast-night : by the tambour frame  
Her own lute thou wilt see : no time to spare,  
For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare  
On such a catering trust my dizzy head.  
Wait here, my child, with patience ; kneel in prayer  
The while : Ah ! thou must needs the lady wed,  
Or may I never leave my grave among the dead.

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.  
The lover's endless moments slowly pass'd ;  
The dame return'd, and whisper'd in his ear  
To follow her ; with aged eyes aghast  
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,  
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain  
The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd, and chaste ;  
Where Porphyro took covert, pleased amain.  
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,  
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,  
When Madeline, St Agnes' charmed maid,  
Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware :  
With silver taper's light, and pious care,  
She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led  
To a safe level matting. Now prepare,  
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed ;  
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray'd and fled.

Out went the taper as she hurried in ;  
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died :  
She closed the door, she panted, all akin  
To spirits of the air, and visions wide :  
No utter'd syllable, or, woe betide !  
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,  
Paining with eloquence her balmy side ;  
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell  
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,  
All garlanded with carven imag'ries  
Of fruits, and flowers, and branches of knot-grass,  
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,  
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,  
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings ;  
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,  
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,  
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.

## PART II

v

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,  
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,  
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon ;  
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,  
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,  
And on her hair a glory, like a saint :  
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,  
Save wings, for heaven :—Porphyro grew faint :  
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint

Anon his heart revives : her vespers done,  
Of all her wreathed pearls her hair she frees ;  
Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one ;  
Loosens her fragrant bodice ; by degrees  
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees :  
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,  
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,  
In fancy, fair St Agnes in her bed,  
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,  
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,  
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppress'd  
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away ;  
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day ;  
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain ;  
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray ;  
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,  
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,  
 Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,  
 And listen'd to her breathing, if it chanced  
 To wake into a slumberous tenderness ;  
 Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,  
 And breath'd himself : then from the closet crept,  
 Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,  
 And over the hush'd carpet, silent, stept,  
 And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where, lo !—how fast she slept.

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon  
 Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set  
 A table, and, half anguish'd, threw thereon  
 A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet :—  
 O for some drowsy Morphean amulet !  
 The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,  
 The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,  
 Affray his ears, though but in dying tone :—  
 The hall door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,  
 In blanched linen, smooth, and lavender'd,  
 While he from forth the closet brought a heap  
 Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd ;  
 With jellies soother than the creamy curd,  
 And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon ;  
 Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd  
 From Fez ; and spiced dainties, every one,  
 From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon.

## PART II

v

These delicates he heap'd with glowing hand  
On golden dishes and in baskets bright  
Of wreathed silver : sumptuous they stand  
In the retired quiet of the night,  
Filling the chilly room with perfume light.—  
And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake !  
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite :  
Open thine eyes, for meek St Agnes' sake,  
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache.

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved arm  
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream  
By the dusk curtains :—'twas a midnight charm  
Impossible to melt as iced stream :  
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam ;  
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies :  
It seem'd he never, never could redeem  
From such a stedfast spell his lady's eyes ;  
So mus'd awhile, entoil'd in woofed phantasies.

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—  
Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tenderest be,  
He play'd an ancient ditty, long since mute,  
In Provence call'd, *La belle dame sans mercy* :  
Close to her ear touching the melody ;—  
Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft moan :  
He ceased—she panted quick—and suddenly  
Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone :  
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured stone.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,  
 Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep :  
 There was a painful change, that nigh expell'd  
 The blisses of her dream so pure and deep.  
 At which fair Madeline began to weep,  
 And moan forth witless words with many a sigh ;  
 While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep ;  
 Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous eye,  
 Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so dreamingly.

Ah, Porphyro ! said she, but even now  
 Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,  
 Made tuneable with every sweetest vow ;  
 And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear :  
 How changed thou art ! how pallid, chill, and drear !  
 Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,  
 Those looks immortal, those complainings dear !  
 O leave me not in this eternal woe,  
 For if thou diest my Love, I know not where to go..

Beyond a mortal man impassion'd far  
 At these voluptuous accents, he arose,  
 Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing star  
 Seen 'mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose ;  
 Into her dream he melted, as the rose  
 Blendeth its odour with the violet,—  
 Solution sweet : meanwhile the frost-wind blows  
 Like Love's alarm, pattering the sharp sleet  
 Against the window-panes ; St Agnes' moon hath set.

## PART II

v

'Tis dark : quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet ;  
This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline !  
'Tis dark : the iced gusts still rave and beat :  
No dream, alas ! alas ! and woe is mine !  
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.  
Cruel ! what traitor could thee hither bring ?  
I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,  
Though thou forsakest a deceived thing ;  
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing.

My Madeline ! sweet dreamer ! lovely bride !  
Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest ?  
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shap'd and vermeil-dyed ?  
Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest  
After so many hours of toil and quest,  
A famish'd pilgrim,—sav'd by miracle,  
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest  
Saving of thy sweet self ; if thou think'st well  
To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

Hark ! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,  
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed :  
Arise—arise ! the morning is at hand ;  
The bloated wassailers will never heed :  
Let us away, my love, with happy speed ;  
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,  
Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead :  
Awake ! arise ! my love, and fearless be,  
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee.

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,  
 For there were sleeping dragons all around,  
 At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears.  
 Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found.  
 In all the house was heard no human sound.  
 A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each door ;  
 The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,  
 Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar ;  
 And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall ;  
 Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide ;  
 Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,  
 With a huge empty flagon by his side :  
 The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,  
 But his sagacious eye an inmate owns :  
 By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide :  
 The chains lie silent on the footworn stones ;  
 The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

And they are gone : aye, ages long ago  
 These lovers fled away into the storm.  
 That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,  
 And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form  
 Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,  
 Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the old  
 Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform ;  
 The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,  
 For aye unsought for slept among his ashes cold.

PART II O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,  
vi                   Alone and palely loitering ?

The sedge has wither'd from the Lake,  
And no birds sing !

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,  
So haggard and so woe-begone ?  
The squirrel's granary is full,  
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow  
With anguish moist and fever dew ;  
And on thy cheeks a fading rose  
Fast withereth too.

I met a Lady in the Meads,  
Full beautiful—a faery's child ;  
Her hair was long, her foot was light,  
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,  
And bracelets too, and fragrant Zone ;  
She look'd at me as she did love,  
And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed,  
And nothing else saw all day long,  
For sidelong would she bend, and sing  
A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,  
And honey wild, and manna dew;  
And sure in language strange she said,  
I love thee true.

PART II

vi

She took me to her elfin grot,  
And there she wept, and sigh'd full sore.  
And there I shut her wild wild eyes  
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep,  
And there I dream'd—Ah ! Woe betide !  
The latest dream I ever dream'd  
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale Kings, and Princes too,  
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all ;  
They cried La belle dame sans merci  
Thee hath in thrall !

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloam,  
With horrid warning gaped wide,  
And I awoke and found me here,  
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,  
Alone and palely loitering,  
Though the sedge is wither'd from the Lake,  
And no birds sing.

PART II UPON a time, before the faery broods  
 vii Drove Nymph and Satyr from the prosperous woods,  
 Before King Oberon's bright diadem,  
 Sceptre, and mantle, clasp'd with dewy gem,  
 Frighted away the Dryads and the Fauns  
 From rushes green, and brakes, and cowslip'd lawns,  
 The ever smitten Hermes empty left  
 His golden throne, bent warm on amorous theft :  
 From high Olympus had he stolen light,  
 On this side of Jove's clouds, to escape the sight  
 Of his great summoner, and made retreat  
 Into a forest on the shores of Crete.  
 For somewhere in that sacred island dwelt  
 A nymph, to whom all hoofed Satyrs knelt ;  
 At whose white feet the languid Tritons poured  
 Pearls, while on land they wither'd and adored.  
 Fast by the springs where she to bathe was wont,  
 And in those meads where sometime she might haunt,  
 Were strewn rich gifts, unknown to any Muse,  
 Though Fancy's casket were unlocked to choose.  
 Ah, what a world of love was at her feet !  
 So Hermes thought, and a celestial heat  
 Burned from his winged heels to either ear,  
 That from a whiteness, as the lily clear,  
 Blush'd into roses 'mid his golden hair,  
 Fallen in jealous curls about his shoulders bare.  
 From vale to vale, from wood to wood, he flew,  
 Breathing upon the flowers his passion new,  
 And wound with many a river to its head,

To find where this sweet nymph prepared her secret bed : PART II  
In vain ; the sweet nymph might nowhere be found, vii  
And so he rested, on the lonely ground,  
Pensive, and full of painful jealousies  
Of the Wood-Gods, and even the very trees.  
There as he stood, he heard a mournful voice,  
Such as, once heard, in gentle heart destroys  
All pain but pity ; thus the lone voice spake :  
When from this wreathed tomb shall I awake !  
When move in a sweet body fit for life,  
And love, and pleasure, and the ruddy strife  
Of hearts and lips ! Ah, miserable me !  
The God, dove-footed, glided silently  
Round bush and tree, soft-brushing, in his speed,  
The taller grasses and full-flowering weed,  
Until he found a palpitating snake,  
Bright and cirque-couchant, in a dusty brake.  
¶ She was a gordian shape of dazzling hue,  
Vermilion-spotted, golden, green, and blue ;  
Striped like a zebra, freckled like a pard,  
Eyed like a peacock, and all crimson barr'd ;  
And full of silver moons, that, as she breathed,  
Dissolv'd, or brighter shone, or interwreathed  
Their lustres with the gloomier tapestries—  
So rainbow-sided, touch'd with miseries,  
She seem'd, at once, some penanced lady elf,  
Some demon's mistress, or the demon's self.  
Upon her crest she wore a wannish fire  
Sprinkled with stars, like Ariadne's tiar :

**PART II** Her head was serpent, but ah, bitter sweet !

vii

She had a woman's mouth with all its pearls complete :  
And for her eyes : what could such eyes do there  
But weep, and weep, that they were born so fair ?  
As Proserpine still weeps for her Sicilian air.  
Her throat was serpent, but the words she spake  
Came, as through bubbling honey, for Love's sake,  
And thus ; while Hermes on his pinions lay,  
Like a stoop'd falcon ere he takes his prey.  
¶Fair Hermes, crown'd with feathers, fluttering light,  
I had a splendid dream of thee last night :  
I saw thee sitting, on a throne of gold,  
Among the Gods, upon Olympus old,  
The only sad one ; for thou didst not hear  
The soft, lute-finger'd Muses chaunting clear,  
Nor even Apollo when he sang alone, [moan.  
Deaf to his throbbing throat's long, long melodious  
I dreamt I saw thee, robed in purple flakes,  
Break amorous through the clouds, as morning breaks,  
And, swiftly as a bright Phœbean dart,  
Strike for the Cretan isle ; and here thou art !  
Too gentle Hermes, hast thou found the maid ?  
Whereat the star of Lethe not delay'd  
His rosy eloquence, and thus inquired :  
Thou smooth-lipp'd serpent, surely high inspired !  
Thou beauteous wreath, with melancholy eyes,  
Possess whatever bliss thou canst devise,  
Telling me only where my nymph is fled,—  
Where she doth breathe ! Bright planet, thou hast said,

Return'd the snake, but seal with oaths, fair God !  
I swear, said Hermes, by my serpent rod,  
And by thine eyes, and by thy starry crown !  
Light flew his earnest words, among the blossoms blown.  
Then thus again the brilliance feminine :  
Too frail of heart ! for this lost nymph of thine,  
Free as the air, invisibly, she strays  
About these thornless wilds ; her pleasant days  
She tastes unseen ; unseen her nimble feet  
Leave traces in the grass and flowers sweet ;  
From weary tendrils, and bow'd branches green,  
She plucks the fruit unseen, she bathes unseen :  
And by my power is her beauty veil'd  
To keep it unaffronted, unassail'd  
By the love-glances of unlovely eyes,  
Of Satyrs, Fauns, and blear'd Silenus' sighs.  
Pale grew her immortality, for woe  
Of all these lovers, and she grieved so  
I took compassion on her, bade her steep  
Her hair in weird syrops, that would keep  
Her loveliness invisible, yet free  
To wander as she loves, in liberty.  
Thou shalt behold her, Hermes, thou alone,  
If thou wilt, as thou swearst, grant my boon !  
Then, once again, the charmed God began  
An oath, and through the serpent's ears it ran  
Warm, tremulous, devout, psalterian.  
Ravish'd, she lifted her Circean head,  
Blush'd a live damask, and swift-lisping said,

PART II

vii

**PART II** I was a woman, let me have once more

vii

A woman's shape, and charming as before.

I love a youth of Corinth—O the bliss !

Give me my woman's form, and place me where he is.

Stoop, Hermes, let me breathe upon thy brow,

And thou shalt see thy sweet nymph even now.

The God on half-shut feathers sank serene,

She breath'd upon his eyes, and swift was seen

Of both the guarded nymph near-smiling on the green.

It was no dream ; or say a dream it was,

Real are the dreams of Gods, and smoothly pass

Their pleasures in a long immortal dream.

One warm, flush'd moment, hovering, it might seem

Dash'd by the wood-nymph's beauty, so he burn'd ;

Then, lighting on the printless verdure, turn'd

To the swoon'd serpent, and with languid arm,

Delicate, put to proof the lithe Caducean charm.

So done, upon the nymph his eyes he bent

Full of adoring tears and blandishment,

And towards her stept : she, like a moon in wane,

Faded before him, cower'd, nor could restrain

Her fearful sobs, self-folding like a flower

That faints into itself at evening hour :

But the God fostering her chilled hand,

She felt the warmth, her eyelids open'd bland,

And, like new flowers at morning song of bees,

Bloom'd, and gave up her honey to the lees.

Into the green-recessed woods they flew' ;

Nor grew they pale, as mortal lovers do.

¶ Left to herself, the serpent now began  
 To change ; her elfin blood in madness ran,  
 Her mouth foam'd, and the grass, therewith besprent,  
 Wither'd at dew so sweet and virulent ;  
 Her eyes in torture fix'd, and anguish drear,  
 Hot, glazed, and wide, with lid-lashes all sear,  
 Flash'd phosphor and sharp sparks, without one cooling **tear**  
 The colours all inflam'd throughout her train,  
 She writh'd about, convulsed with scarlet pain :  
 A deep volcanian yellow took the place  
 Of all her milder-mooned body's grace ;  
 And, as the lava ravishes the mead,  
 Spoilt all her silver mail, and golden brede ;  
 Made gloom of all her frecklings, streaks and bars,  
 Eclipsed her crescents, and lick'd up her stars :  
 So that, in moments few, she was undrest  
 Of all her sapphires, greens, and amethyst,  
 And rubious-argent : of all these bereft,  
 Nothing but pain and ugliness were left.  
 Still shone her crown ; that vanish'd, also she  
 Melted and disappear'd as suddenly ;  
 And in the air, her new voice luting soft,  
 Cried, Lycius ! gentle Lycius !—Borne aloft  
 With the bright mists above the mountains hoar  
 These words dissolv'd : Crete's forests heard no more.

## II

WHITHER fled Lamia, now a lady bright,

**PART II** A full-born beauty new and exquisite ?

vii

She fled into that valley they pass o'er  
Who go to Corinth from Cenchreas' shore ;  
And rested at the foot of those wild hills,  
The rugged founts of the Peræan rills,  
And of that other ridge whose barren back  
Stretches, with all its mist and cloudy rack,  
South-westward to Cleone. There she stood,  
About a young bird's flutter from a wood,  
Fair, on a sloping green of mossy tread,  
By a clear pool, wherein she passioned  
To see herself escaped from so sore ills,  
While her robes flaunted with the daffodils:  
¶ Ah, happy Lycius !—for she was a maid  
More beautiful than ever twisted braid,  
Or sigh'd, or blush'd, or on spring-flower'd lea  
Spread a green kirtle to the minstrelsy :  
A virgin purest lipp'd, yet in the lore  
Of love deep learned to the red heart's core :  
Not one hour old, yet of sciential brain  
To unperplex bliss from its neighbour pain ;  
Define their pettish limits, and estrange  
Their points of contact, and swift counterchange ;  
Intrigue with the specious chaos, and dispart  
Its most ambiguous atoms with sure art ;  
As though in Cupid's college she had spent  
Sweet days a lovely graduate, still unshent,  
And kept his rosy terms in idle languishment.  
¶ Why this fair creature chose so fairly

By the wayside to linger, we shall see ;  
But first 'tis fit to tell how she could muse  
And dream, when in the serpent prison-house,  
Of all she list, strange or magnificent :  
How, ever, where she will'd, her spirit went ;  
Whether to faint Elysium, or where  
Down through tress-lifting waves the Nereids fair  
Wind into Thetis' bower by many a pearly stair ;  
Or where God Bacchus drains his cup divine,  
Stretch'd out, at ease, beneath a glutinous pine ;  
Or where in Pluto's gardens palatine  
Mulciber's columns gleam in far piazzian line.  
And sometimes into cities she would send  
Her dream, with feast and rioting to blend ;  
And once, while among mortals dreaming thus,  
She saw the young Corinthian Lycius  
Charioting foremost in the envious race,  
Like a young Jove with calm uneager face,  
And fell into a swooning love of him.  
Now on the moth-time of that evening dim  
He would return that way, as well she knew,  
To Corinth from the shore ; for freshly blew  
The eastern soft wind, and his galley now  
Grated the quaystones with her brazen prow  
In port Cenchreas, from Egina isle  
Fresh anchor'd ; whither he had been awhile  
To sacrifice to Jove, whose temple there  
Waits with high marble doors for blood and incense rare.  
Jove heard his vows, and better'd his desire ;

**PART II** For by some' freakful chance he made retire  
vii From his companions, and set forth to walk,  
Perhaps grown wearied of their Corinth talk :  
Over the solitary hills he fared,  
Thoughtless at first, but ere eve's star appear'd  
His phantasy was lost, where reason fades,  
In the calm'd twilight of Platonic shades.  
Lamia beheld him coming, near, more near—  
Close to her passing, in indifference drear,  
His silent sandals swept the mossy green ;  
So neighbour'd to him, and yet so unseen,  
She stood : he pass'd, shut up in mysteries,  
His mind wrapp'd like his mantle, while her eyes  
Follow'd his steps, and her neck regal white  
Turn'd—syllabbling thus : Ah, Lycius bright,  
And will you leave me on the hills alone ?  
Lycius, look back ! and be some pity shown.  
He did : not with cold wonder fearingly,  
But Orpheus-like at an Eurydice ;  
For so delicious were the words she sung,  
It seem'd he had lov'd them a whole summer long.  
And soon his eyes had drunk her beauty up,  
Leaving no drop in the bewildering cup,  
And still the cup was full,—while he, afraid  
Lest she should vanish ere his lip had paid  
Due adoration, thus began to adore :  
Her soft look growing coy, she saw his chain so' sure :  
Leave thee alone ! Look back ! Ah, Goddess, see  
Whether my eyes can ever turn from thee !

For pity do not this sad heart belie—  
Even as thou vanishest so I shall die.  
Stay ! though a Naiad of the rivers, stay !  
To thy far wishes will thy streams obey :  
Stay ! though the greenest woods be thy domain,  
Alone they can drink up the morning rain :  
Though a descended Pleiad, will not one  
Of thine harmonious sisters keep in tune  
Thy spheres, and as thy silver proxy shine ?  
So sweetly to these ravish'd ears of mine  
Came thy sweet greeting, that if thou shouldst fade  
Thy memory will waste me to a shade :  
For pity do not melt !—If I should stay,  
Said Lamia, here, upon this floor of clay,  
And pain my steps upon these flowers too rough,  
What canst thou say or do of charm enough  
To dull the nice remembrance of my home ?  
Thou canst not ask me with thee here to roam  
Over these hills and vales, where no joy is,  
Empty of immortality and bliss !  
Thou art a scholar, Lycius, and must know  
That finer spirits cannot breathe below  
In human climes, and live : Alas ! poor youth,  
What taste of purer air hast thou to soothe  
My essence ? What serener palaces,  
Where I may all my many senses please,  
And by mysterious sleights a hundred thirsts appease ?  
It cannot be—Adieu ! So said, she rose  
Tiptoe, with white arms spread. He, sick to lose

**PART II** The amorous promise of her lone complain,  
vii Swoon'd, murmuring of love, and pale with pain.  
The cruel lady, without any show  
Of sorrow for her tender favourite's woe,  
But rather, if her eyes could brighter be,  
With brighter eyes and slow amenity,  
Put her new lips to his, and gave afresh  
The life she had so tangled in her mesh :  
And as he from one trance was wakening  
Into another, she began to sing,  
Happy in beauty, life, and love, and everything,  
A song of love, too sweet for earthly lyres, [fires.  
While, like held breath, the stars drew in their panting  
And then she whispered in such trembling tone,  
As those who, safe together met alone  
For the first time through many anguish'd days,  
Use other speech than looks ; bidding him raise  
His drooping head, and clear his soul of doubt,  
For that she was a woman, and without  
Any more subtle fluid in her veins  
Than throbbing blood, and that the self-same pains  
Inhabited her frail-strung heart as his.  
And next she wonder'd how his eyes could miss  
Her face so long in Corinth, where, she said,  
She dwelt but half retired, and there had led  
Days happy as the gold coin could invent  
Without the aid of love ; yet in content,  
Till she saw him, as once she pass'd him by,  
Where 'gainst a column he leant thoughtfully

At Venus' temple porch, 'mid baskets heap'd  
Of amorous herbs and flowers, newly reap'd  
Late on that eve, as 'twas the night before  
The Adonian feast ; whereof she saw no more,  
But wept alone those days, for why should she adore ?  
Lycius from death awoke into amaze,  
To see her still, and singing so sweet lays ;  
Then from amaze into delight he fell  
To hear her whisper woman's lore so well ;  
And every word she spake entic'd him on  
To unperplex'd delight and pleasure known.  
Let the mad poets say whate'er they please  
Of the sweets of Fairies, Peris, Goddesses,  
There is not such a treat among them all,  
Haunters of cavern, lake, and waterfall,  
As a real woman, lineal indeed  
From Pyrrha's pebbles or old Adam's seed.  
Thus gentle Lamia judged, and judged aright,  
That Lycius could not love in half a fright,  
So threw the goddess off, and won his heart  
More pleasantly by playing woman's part,  
With no more awe than what her beauty gave,  
That, while it smote, still guaranteed to save.  
Lycius to all made eloquent reply,  
Marrying to every word a twinborn sigh ;  
And last, pointing to Corinth, ask'd her sweet,  
If 'twas too far that night for her soft feet.  
The way was short, for Lamia's eagerness  
Made, by a spell, the triple league decrease

**PART II** To a few paces ; not at all surmised

vii By blinded Lycius, so in her comprised.

They pass'd the city gates, he knew not how,  
So noiseless, and he never thought to know.

¶ As men talk in a dream, so Corinth all,  
Throughout her palaces imperial,  
And all her populous streets and temples lewd,  
Mutter'd, like tempest in the distance brew'd,  
To the wide-spreaded night above her towers.  
Men, women, rich and poor, in the cool hours,  
Shuffled their sandals o'er the pavement white,  
Companion'd or alone ; while many a light  
Flared, here and there, from wealthy festivals,  
And threw their moving shadows on the walls,  
Or found them cluster'd in the corniced shade  
Of some arch'd temple door, or dusky colonnade.

¶ Muffling his face, of greeting friends in fear,  
Her fingers he press'd hard, as one came near  
With curl'd gray beard, sharp eyes, and smooth bald  
Slow-stepp'd, and robed in philosophic gown : [crown,  
Lycius shrank closer, as they met and past,  
Into his mantle, adding wings to haste,  
While hurried Lamia trembled : Ah, said he,  
Why do you shudder, love, so ruefully ?  
Why does your tender palm dissolve in dew ?  
I'm wearied, said fair Lamia : tell me who  
Is that old man ? I cannot bring to mind  
His features :—Lycius ! wherefore did you blind  
Yourself from his quick eyes ? Lycius replied,

'Tis Apollonius sage, my trusty guide  
And good instructor : but to-night he seems  
The ghost of folly haunting my sweet dreams.  
¶While yet he spake they had arrived before  
A pillar'd porch, with lofty portal door,  
Where hung a silver lamp, whose phosphor glow  
Reflected in the slabbed steps below,  
Mild as a star in water ; for so new,  
And so unsullied was the marble hue,  
So through the crystal polish, liquid fine,  
Ran the dark veins, that none but feet divine  
Could e'er have touch'd there. Sounds Æolian  
Breath'd from the hinges, as the ample span  
Of the wide doors disclos'd a place unknown  
Some time to any, but those two alone,  
And a few Persian mutes, who that same year  
Were seen about the markets : none knew where  
They could inhabit : the most curious  
Were foil'd, who watch'd to trace them to their house :  
And but the flitter-winged verse must tell,  
For truth's sake, what woe afterwards befel,  
'Twould humour many a heart to leave them thus,  
Shut from the busy world of more incredulous.

## III

LOVE in a hut, with water and a crust,  
Is—Love, forgive us !—cinders, ashes, dust ;  
Love in a palace is perhaps at last

PART II More grievous torment than a hermit's fast :—

vii

That is a doubtful tale from faery land,  
Hard for the non-elect to understand.  
Had Lycius liv'd to hand his story down,  
He might have given the moral a fresh frown,  
Or clench'd it quite : but too short was their bliss  
To breed distrust and hate, that make the soft voice hiss.  
Besides, there, nightly, with terrific glare,  
Love, jealous grown of so complete a pair,  
Hover'd and buzz'd his wings, with fearful roar,  
Above the lintel of their chamber door,  
And down the passage cast a glow upon the floor.  
¶ For all this came a ruin : side by side  
They were enthroned, in the even tide,  
Upon a couch, near to a curtaining  
Whose airy texture, from a golden string,  
Floated into the room, and let appear  
Unveil'd the summer heaven, blue and clear,  
Betwixt two marble shafts :—there they reposed,  
Where use had made it sweet, with eyelids closed,  
Saving a tithe which love still open kept,  
That they might see each other while they almost slept ;  
When from the slope side of a suburb hill,  
Deafening the swallow's twitter, came a thrill  
Of trumpets—Lycius started—the sounds fled,  
But left a thought, a buzzing in his head.  
For the first time, since first he harbour'd in  
That purple-lined palace of sweet sin,  
His spirit pass'd beyond its golden bourn

Into the noisy world almost forsworn.  
The lady, ever watchful, penetrant,  
Saw this with pain, so arguing a want  
Of something more, more than her empery  
Of joys ; and she began to moan and sigh  
Because he mused beyond her, knowing well  
That but a moment's thought is passion's passing bell.  
Why do you sigh, fair creature ? whisper'd he ;  
Why do you think ? return'd she tenderly :  
You have deserted me ;—where am I now ?  
Not in your heart while care weighs on your brow :  
No, no, you have dismiss'd me ; and I go  
From your breast houseless : aye, it must be so.  
He answer'd, bending to her open eyes,  
Where he was mirror'd small in paradise,  
My silver planet, both of eve and morn !  
Why will you plead yourself so sad forlorn,  
While I am striving how to fill my heart  
With deeper crimson, and a double smart ?  
How to entangle, trammel up, and snare  
Your soul in mine and labyrinth you there,  
Like the hid scent in an unbudded rose ?  
Aye, a sweet kiss—you see your mighty woes.  
My thoughts ! shall I unveil them ? Listen then !  
What mortal hath a prize, that other men  
May be confounded and abash'd withal,  
But lets it sometimes pace abroad majestical,  
And triumph, as in thee I should rejoice  
Amid the hoarse alarm of Corinth's voice.

**PART II** Let my foes choke, and my friends shout afar,  
vii While through the thronged streets your bridal car  
Wheels round its dazzling spokes.—The lady's cheek  
Trembled ; she nothing said, but, pale and meek,  
Arose and knelt before him, wept a rain  
Of sorrows at his words ; at last with pain  
Beseeching him, the while his hand she wrung,  
To change his purpose. He thereat was stung,  
Perverse, with stronger fancy to reclaim  
Her wild and timid nature to his aim ;  
Besides, for all his love, in self despite,  
Against his better self, he took delight  
Luxurious in her sorrows, soft and new.  
His passion, cruel grown, took on a hue  
Fierce and sanguineous as 'twas possible  
In one whose brow had no dark veins to swell.  
Fine was the mitigated fury, like  
Apollo's presence when in act to strike  
The serpent—Ha, the serpent ! certes, she  
Was none. She burnt, she loved the tyranny,  
And, all subdued, consented to the hour  
When to the bridal he should lead his paramour.  
Whispering in midnight silence, said the youth,  
Sure some sweet name thou hast, though, by my truth,  
I have not ask'd it, ever thinking thee  
Not mortal, but of heavenly progeny,  
As still I do. Hast any mortal name,  
Fit appellation for this dazzling frame ?  
Or friends or kinsfolk on the citied earth,

To share our marriage feast and nuptial mirth ?  
I have no friends, said Lamia, no, not one ;  
My presence in wide Corinth hardly known :  
My parents' bones are in their dusty urns  
Sepulchred, where no kindled incense burns,  
Seeing all their luckless race are dead, save me,  
And I neglect the holy rite for thee.

Even as you list invite your many guests ;  
But if, as now it seems, your vision rests  
With any pleasure on me, do not bid  
Old Apollonius—from him keep me hid.

Lycius, perplex'd at words so blind and blank,  
Made close inquiry ; from whose touch she shrank,  
Feigning a sleep ; and he to the dull shade  
Of deep sleep in a moment was betray'd.

¶ It was the custom then to bring away  
The bride from home at blushing shut of day,  
Veil'd, in a chariot, heralded along  
By strewn flowers, torches, and a marriage song,  
With other pageants : but this fair unknown  
Had not a friend. So being left alone,  
(Lycius was gone to summon all his kin)  
And knowing surely she could never win  
His foolish heart from its mad pompousness,  
She set herself, high-thoughted, how to dress  
The misery in fit magnificence.

She did so, but 'tis doubtful how and whence  
Came, and who were her subtle servitors.  
About the halls, and to and from the doors,

PART II There was a noise of wings, till in short space  
vii The glowing banquet-room shone with wide-arched  
A haunting music, sole perhaps and lone [grace.  
Supportress of the faery-roof, made moan  
Throughout, as fearful the whole charm might fade.  
Fresh carved cedar, mimicking a glade  
Of palm and plantain, met from either side,  
High in the midst, in honour of the bride :  
Two palms and then two plantains, and so on,  
From either side their stems branch'd one to one  
All down the aisled place ; and beneath all [wall.  
There ran a stream of lamps straight on from wall to  
So canopied, lay an untasted feast  
Teeming with odours. Lamia, regal drest,  
Silently paced about, and as she went,  
In pale contented sort of discontent,  
Mission'd her viewless servants to enrich  
The fretted splendour of each nook and niche.  
Between the tree-stems, marbled plain at first,  
Came jasper panels ; then, anon, there burst  
Forth creeping imagery of slighter trees,  
And with the larger wove in small intricacies.  
Approving all, she faded at self-will,  
And shut the chamber up, close, hush'd, and still,  
Complete and ready for the revels rude,  
When dreadful guests would come to spoil her solitude.  
¶ The day appear'd, and all the gossip rout.  
O senseless Lycius ! Madman ! wherefore flout  
The silent-blessing fate, warm cloister'd hours,

And show to common eyes these secret bowers ?  
The herd approach'd ; each guest, with busy brain,  
Arriving at the portal, gazed amain,  
And enter'd marveling : for they knew the street,  
Remember'd it from childhood all complete  
Without a gap, yet ne'er before had seen  
That royal porch, that high-built fair demesne ;  
So in they hurried all, maz'd, curious and keen ;  
Save one, who look'd thereon with eye severe,  
And with calm-planted steps walk'd in austere ;  
'Twas Apollonius : something too he laugh'd,  
As though some knotty problem, that had daft  
His patient thought, had now begun to thaw,  
And solve and melt :—'twas just as he foresaw.  
¶ He met within the murmurous vestibule  
His young disciple. 'Tis no common rule,  
Lycius, said he, for uninvited guest  
To force himself upon you, and infest  
With an unbidden presence the bright throng  
Of younger friends ; yet must I do this wrong,  
And you forgive me. Lycius blush'd, and led  
The old man through the inner doors broad-spread ;  
With reconciling words and courteous mien  
Turning into sweet milk the sophist's spleen.  
¶ Of wealthy lustre was the banquet-room,  
Fill'd with pervading brilliance and perfume :  
Before each lucid panel fuming stood  
A censer fed with myrrh and spiced wood,  
Each by a sacred tripod held aloft,

PART II Whose slender feet wide-swerv'd upon the soft

vii

Wool-woofed carpets : fifty wreaths of smoke  
From fifty censers their light voyage took  
To the high roof, still mimick'd as they rose  
Along the mirror'd walls by twin-clouds odorous.  
Twelve sphered tables, by silk seats insphered,  
High as the level of a man's breast rear'd  
On libbard's paws, upheld the heavy gold  
Of cups and goblets, and the store thrice told  
Of Ceres' horn, and, in huge vessels, wine  
Come from the gloomy tun with merry shine.  
Thus loaded with a feast the tables stood,  
Each shrining in the midst the image of a God.

¶ When in an antechamber every guest  
Had felt the cold full sponge to pleasure press'd,  
By minist'ring slaves, upon his hands and feet,  
And fragrant oils with ceremony meet  
Pour'd on his hair, they all moved to the feast  
In white robes, and themselves in order placed  
Around the silken couches, wondering [spring.  
Whence all this mighty cost and blaze of wealth could  
¶ Soft went the music the soft air along,  
While fluent Greek a vowel'd undersong  
Kept up among the guests, discoursing low  
At first, for scarcely was the wine at flow ;  
But when the happy vintage touch'd their brains,  
Louder they talk, and louder come the strains  
Of powerful instruments :—the gorgeous dyes,  
The space, the splendour of the draperies,

The roof of awful richness, nectarous cheer,  
Beautiful slaves, and Lamia's self, appear,  
Now, when the wine has done its rosy deed,  
And every soul from human trammels freed,  
No more so strange ; for merry wine, sweet wine,  
Will make Elysian shades not too fair, too divine.  
Soon was God Bacchus at meridian height ;  
Flush'd were their cheeks, and bright eyes double bright :  
Garlands of every green and every scent  
From vales deflower'd, or forest-trees branch-rent,  
In baskets of bright osier'd gold were brought,  
High as the handles heap'd, to suit the thought  
Of every guest ; that each, as he did please,  
Might fancy-fit his brows, silk-pillow'd at his ease.  
¶ What wreath for Lamia ? What for Lycius ?  
What for the sage, old Apollonius ?  
Upon her aching forehead be there hung  
The leaves of willow and of adder's tongue ;  
And for the youth, quick, let us strip for him  
The thyrsus, that his watching eye may swim  
Into forgetfulness ; and, for the sage,  
Let spear-grass and the spiteful thistle wage  
War on his temples. Do not all charms fly  
At the mere touch of cold philosophy ?  
There was an awful rainbow once in heaven :  
We know her woof, her texture ; she is given  
In the dull catalogue of common things.  
Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,  
Conquer all mysteries by rule and line,

PART II Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine,

vii

Unweave a rainbow, as it erewhile made  
The tender-person'd Lamia melt into a shade.

¶ By her glad Lycius sitting, in chief place,  
Scarce saw in all the room another face,  
Till, checking his love trance, a cup he took  
Full brimm'd, and opposite sent forth a look  
'Cross the broad table, to beseech a glance  
From his old teacher's wrinkled countenance,  
And pledge him. The bald-head philosopher  
Had fix'd his eye, without a twinkle or stir,  
Full on the alarmed beauty of the bride, [pride.  
Brow-beating her fair form, and troubling her sweet  
Lycius then press'd her hand, with devout touch,  
As pale it lay upon the rosy couch :  
"Twas icy, and the cold ran through his veins ;  
Then sudden it grew hot, and all the pains  
Of an unnatural heat shot into his heart.  
Lamia, what means this ? Wherefore dost thou start ?  
Know'st thou that man ? Poor Lamia answer'd not.  
He gazed into her eyes, and not a jot  
Own'd they the lovelorn piteous appeal :  
More, more he gazed : his human senses reel :  
Some hungry spell that loveliness absorbs ;  
There was no recognition in those orbs.  
Lamia ! he cried—and no soft-toned reply.  
The many heard, and the loud revelry  
Grew hush ; the stately music no more breathes ;  
The myrtle sicken'd in a thousand wreaths.

By faint degrees, voice, lute, and pleasure ceased ;  
A deadly silence step by step increased  
Until it seem'd a horrid presence there,  
And not a man but felt the terror in his hair.  
Lamia ! he shriek'd ; and nothing but the shriek  
With its sad echo did the silence break.  
Begone, foul dream ! he cried, gazing again  
In the bride's face, where now no azure vein  
Wander'd on fair-spaced temples ; no soft bloom  
Misted the cheek ; no passion to illume  
The deep-recessed vision :—all was blight ;  
Lamia, no longer fair, there sat a deadly white.  
Shut, shut those juggling eyes, thou ruthless man !  
Turn them aside, wretch ! or the righteous ban  
Of all the Gods, whose dreadful images  
Here represent their shadowy presences,  
May pierce them on the sudden with the thorn  
Of painful blindness ; leaving thee forlorn,  
In trembling dotage to the feeblest fright  
Of conscience, for their long offended might,  
For all thine impious proud-heart sophistries,  
Unlawful magic, and enticing lies.  
Corinthians ! look upon that grey-beard wretch !  
Mark how, possess'd, his lashless eyelids stretch  
Around his demon eyes ! Corinthians, see !  
My sweet bride withers at their potency.  
Fool ! said the sophist, in an under-tone  
Gruff with contempt ; which a death-nighing moan  
From Lycius answer'd, as heart-struck and lost,

PART II He sank supine beside the aching ghost.

vii

Fool ! Fool ! repeated he, while his eyes still  
Relented not, nor mov'd ; from every ill  
Of life have I preserv'd thee to this day,  
And shall I see thee made a serpent's prey ?  
Then Lamia breathed death breath ; the sophist's eye.  
Like a sharp spear, went through her utterly,  
Keen, cruel, perceant, stinging : she, as well  
As her weak hand could any meaning tell,  
Motion'd him to be silent ; vainly so,  
He look'd and look'd again a level—No !  
A Serpent ! echoed he ; no sooner said,  
Than with a frightful scream she vanished :  
And Lycius' arms were empty of delight,  
As were his limbs of life, from that same night.  
On the high couch he lay ! his friends came round—  
Supported him—no pulse, or breath they found,  
And, in its marriage robe, the heavy body wound.

## PART III. SONNETS

PART III MANY the wonders I this day have seen :

i. ii      The sun, when first he kist away the tears  
That fill'd the eyes of morn ; the laurell'd peers  
Who from the feathery gold of evening lean ;  
The ocean with its vastness, its blue green,  
Its ships, its rocks, its caves, its hopes, its fears,  
Its voice mysterious, which whoso hears  
Must think on what will be, and what has been.  
E'en now, dear George, while this for you I write,  
Cynthia is from her silken curtains peeping  
So scantly, that it seems her bridal night,  
And she her half-discover'd revels keeping.  
But what, without the social thought of thee,  
Would be the wonders of the sky and sea ?

SMALL, busy flames play through the fresh laid coal  
And their faint cracklings o'er our silence creep  
Like whispers of the household gods that keep  
A gentle empire o'er fraternal souls.  
And while, for rhymes, I search around the poles,  
Your eyes are fix'd, as in poetic sleep,  
Upon the lore so voluble and deep,  
That aye at fall of night our care condoles.  
This is your birth-day, Tom, and I rejoice  
That thus it passes smoothly, quietly.  
Many such eves of gently whisp'ring noise  
May we together pass, and calmly try  
What are this world's true joys—ere the great voice  
From its fair face shall bid our spirits fly.

O SOLITUDE ! if I must with thee dwell,  
Let it not be among the jumbled heap  
Of murky buildings ; climb with me the steep,—  
Nature's observatory—whence the dell,  
Its flowery slopes, its river's crystal swell,  
May seem a span ; let me thy vigils keep  
'Mongst boughs pavilion'd, where the deer's swift leap  
Startles the wild bee from the fox-glove bell.  
But though I'll gladly trace these scenes with thee,  
Yet the sweet converse of an innocent mind,  
Whose words are images of thoughts refined,  
Is my soul's pleasure ; and it sure must be  
Almost the highest bliss of human-kind,  
When to thy haunts two kindred spirits flee.

PART III  
iii. iv

KEEN, fitful gusts are whisp'ring here and there  
Among the bushes, half leafless and dry ;  
The stars look very cold about the sky,  
And I have many miles on foot to fare ;  
Yet feel I little of the cool bleak air,  
Or of the dead leaves rustling drearily,  
Or of those silver lamps that burn on high,  
Or of the distance from home's pleasant lair :  
For I am brimfull of the friendliness  
That in a little cottage I have found ;  
Of fair-hair'd Milton's eloquent distress,  
And all his love for gentle Lycid drown'd,  
Of lovely Laura in her light green dress,  
And faithful Petrarch gloriously crown'd.

### PART III HOW many bards gild the lapses of time !

v. vi        A few of them have ever been the food  
              Of my delighted fancy,—I could brood  
Over their beauties, earthly, or sublime :  
And often, when I sit me down to rhyme,  
    These will in throngs before my mind intrude :  
    But no confusion, no disturbance rude  
Do they occasion ; 'tis a pleasing chime.  
So the unnumber'd sounds that evening store ;  
    The songs of birds—the whispering of the leaves—  
    The voice of waters—the great bell that heaves  
With solemn sound,—and thousand others more,  
    That distance of recognizance bereaves,  
Make pleasing music, and not wild uproar.

THE poetry of earth is never dead :

    When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,  
    And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run  
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead ;  
That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the lead

    In summer luxury,—he has never done  
    With his delights, for when tired out with fun  
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.

The poetry of earth is ceasing never :

    On a lone winter evening, when the frost  
    Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills  
The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,  
    And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,  
    The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

TO one who has been long in city pent,  
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair  
And open face of heaven,—to breathe a prayer  
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.  
Who is more happy, when, with heart's content,  
Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair  
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair  
And gentle tale of love and languishment ?  
Returning home at evening, with an ear  
Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye  
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,  
He mourns that day so soon has glided by :  
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear  
That falls through the clear ether silently.

O GOLDEN-TONGUED Romance with serene lute !  
Fair plumed Syren ! Queen of far away !  
Leave melodizing on this wintry day,  
Shut up thine olden pages, and be mute :  
Adieu ! for once again the fierce dispute,  
Betwixt damnation and impassion'd clay,  
Must I burn through ; once more humbly assay  
The bitter sweet of this Shakespearian fruit.  
Chief Poet ! and ye clouds of Albion,  
Begetters of our deep eternal theme,  
When through the old oak forest I am gone,  
Let me not wander in a barren dream,  
But, when I am consumed in the Fire,  
Give me new Phœnix-wings to fly at my desire.

**PART III** **GREAT** spirits now on earth are sojourning ;

ix. x      He of the cloud, the cataract, the lake,  
Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide awake,  
Catches his freshness from Archangel's wing :  
He of the rose, the violet, the spring,  
The social smile, the chain for Freedom's sake :  
And lo !—whose steadfastness would never take  
A meaner sound than Raphael's whispering.  
And other spirits there are standing apart  
Upon the forehead of the age to come ;  
These, these will give the world another heart,  
And other pulses. Hear ye not the hum  
Of mighty workings ?  
Listen awhile ye nations, and be dumb.

**WHEN** I have fears that I may cease to be

Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain,  
Before high-piled books, in charactery,  
Hold like rich garners the full-ripen'd grain ;  
When I behold, upon the night's starr'd face,  
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,  
And think that I may never live to trace  
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance :  
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour !  
That I shall never look upon thee more,  
Never have relish in the faery power  
Of unreflecting love !—then on the shore  
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think,  
Till Love and Fame to nothingness do sink.

TIME'S sea hath been five years at its slow ebb ;  
Long hours have to and fro let creep the sand ;  
Since I was tangled in thy beauty's web,  
And snared by the ungloving of thine hand.  
And yet I never look on midnight sky,  
But I behold thine eyes' well memoried light ;  
I cannot look upon the rose's dye,  
But to thy cheek my soul doth take its flight ;  
I cannot look on any budding flower,  
But my fond ear, in fancy at thy lips,  
And hearkening for a love-sound, doth devour  
Its sweets in the wrong sense :—Thou shalt eclipse  
Every delight with sweet remembering,  
And grief unto my darling joys dost bring.

I CRY your mercy—pity—love !—aye, love !  
Merciful love that tantalises not,  
One-thoughted, never-wandering, guileless love,  
Unmask'd, and being seen—without a blot !  
O ! let me have thee whole,—all—all—be mine !  
That shape, that fairness, that sweet minor zest  
Of love, your kiss,—those hands, those eyes divine,  
That warm, white, lucent, million-pleasured breast,—  
Yourself—your soul—in pity give me all,  
Withhold no atom's atom or I die,  
Or living on, perhaps, your wretched thrall,  
Forget, in the mist of idle misery,  
Life's purposes,—the palate of my mind  
Losing its gust, and my ambition blind !

### PART III O SOFT enbalmer of the still midnight !

xiii. xiv     Shutting, with careful fingers and benign,  
Our gloom-pleased eyes, embower'd from the light,  
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine ;  
O soothest Sleep ! if so it please thee, close,  
In midst of this thine hymn, my willing eyes,  
Or wait the Amen, ere thy poppy throws  
Around my bed its lulling charities ;  
Then save me, or the passed day will shine  
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes ;  
Save me from curious Conscience, that still hoards  
Its strength, for darkness burrowing like a mole ;  
Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,  
And seal the hushed Casket of my Soul.

AS Hermes once took to his feathers light,  
When lulled Argus, baffled, swoon'd and slept,  
So on a Delphic reed, my idle spright  
So play'd, so charm'd, so conquer'd, so bereft  
The dragon-world of all its hundred eyes,  
And, seeing it asleep, so fled away ;  
Not to pure Ida with its snow-cold skies,  
Nor unto Tempe where Jove grieved a day,  
But to that second circle of sad Hell,  
Where in the gust, the whirlwind, and the flaw  
Of rain and hail-stones, lovers need not tell  
Their sorrows. Pale were the sweet lips I saw,  
Pale were the lips I kiss'd, and fair the form  
I floated with, about that melancholy storm.

COME hither all sweet maidens soberly,  
Down-looking aye, and with a chaste'n'd light  
Hid in the fringes of your eyelids white,  
And meekly let your fair hands joined be,  
As if so gentle that ye could not see,  
Untouch'd. a victim of your beauty bright,  
Sinking away to his young spirit's night,  
Sinking bewilder'd 'mid the dreary sea :  
'Tis young Leander toiling to his death ;  
Nigh swooning, he doth purse his weary lips  
For Hero's cheek, and smiles against her smile.  
O horrid dream ! see how his body dips,  
Dead heavy ; arms and shoulders gleam awhile :  
He's gone ; up bubbles all his amorous breath !

WHY did I laugh to-night ? No voice will tell :  
No God, no Demon of severe response,  
Deigns to reply from Heaven or from Hell.  
Then to my human heart I turn at once.  
Heart ! Thou and I are here, sad and alone ;  
I say, why did I laugh ? O mortal pain !  
O Darkness ! Darkness ! ever must I moan,  
To question Heaven and Hell and Heart in vain.  
Why did I laugh ? I know this Being's lease,  
My fancy to its utmost blisses spreads ;  
Yet would I on this very midnight cease,  
And the world's gaudy ensigns see in shreds ;  
Verse, Fame, and Beauty are intense indeed,  
But Death intenser—Death is Life's high meed.

**PART III** AFTER dark vapors have oppress'd our plains  
xvii. xviii For a long dreary season, comes a day  
Born of the gentle South, and clears away  
From the sick heavens all unseemly stains.  
The anxious month, relieved of its pains,  
Takes as a long lost right the feel of May ;  
The eyelids with the passing coolness play,  
Like rose leaves with the drip of summer rains.  
And calmest thoughts come round us—as of leaves  
Budding, —fruit ripening in stillness,—autumn suns  
Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves,—  
Sweet Sappho's cheek.—a sleeping infant's breath,—  
The gradual sand that through an hour-glass runs,—  
A woodland rivulet,—a Poet's death.

**FOUR** seasons fill the measure of the year ;  
There are four seasons in the mind of man :  
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear  
Takes in all beauty with an easy span :  
He has his Summer, when luxuriously  
Spring's honey'd cud of youthful thought he loves  
To ruminate, and by such dreaming high  
Is nearest unto heaven : quiet coves  
His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings  
He furleth close ; contented so to look  
On mists in idleness—to let fair things  
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.  
He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,  
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.

PART IV. ODES (WITH INCLUDED  
ROUNDELAYS)

PART IV MOTHER of Hermes ! and still youthful Maia !

May I sing to thee

As thou wast hymned on the shores of Baiæ ?

Or may I woo thee

In earlier Sicilian ? or thy smiles

Seek as they once were sought, in Grecian isles,

By bards who died content on pleasant sward,

Leaving great verse unto a little clan ?

O, give me their old vigour, and unheard

Save of the quiet Primrose, and the span

Of heaven and few ears,

Rounded by thee, my song should die away

Content as theirs,

Rich in the simple worship of a day.

O THOU, whose mighty palace roof doth hang  
 From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth  
 Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life, death  
 Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness ;  
 Who lov'st to see the hamadryads dress  
 Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels darken ;  
 And through whole solemn hours dost sit, and hearken  
 The dreary melody of bedded reeds—  
 In desolate places, where dank moisture breeds  
 The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth ;  
 Bethinking thee, how melancholy loth  
 Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx—do thou now  
 By thy love's milky brow !  
 By all the trembling mazes that she ran,  
 Hear us, great Pan !

## II

O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet, turtles  
 Passion their voices cooingly 'mong myrtles,  
 What time thou wanderest at eventide  
 Through sunny meadows, that outskirt the side  
 Of thine enmossed realms : O thou, to whom  
 Broad leaved fig trees even now foredoom  
 Their ripen'd fruitage ; yellow girted bees  
 Their golden honeycombs ; our village leas  
 Their fairest blossom'd beans and poppied corn ;  
 The chuckling linnet its five young unborn,  
 To sing for thee ; low creeping strawberries  
 Their summer coolness ; pent up butterflies

**PART IV** Their freckled wings ; yea, the fresh budding year  
ii All its completions—be quickly near,  
By every wind that nods the mountain pine,  
O forester divine !

### III

Thou, to whom every faun and satyr flies  
For willing service ; whether to surprise  
The squatted hare while in half sleeping fit ;  
Or upward ragged precipices flit  
To save poor lambkins from the eagle's maw ;  
Or by mysterious enticement draw  
Bewilder'd shepherds to their path again ;  
Or to tread breathless round the frothy main  
And gather up all fancifullest shells  
For thee to tumble into Naiads' cells,  
And, being hidden, laugh at their out-peeping ;  
Or to delight thee with fantastic leaping,  
The while they pelt each other on the crown  
With silvery oak apples, and fir cones brown—  
By all the echoes that about thee ring,  
Hear us, O satyr king !

### IV

O Harkener to the loud clapping shears  
While ever and anon to his shorn peers  
A ram goes bleating : Winder of the horn,  
When snouted wild-boars routing tender corn  
Anger our huntsmen : Breather round our farms,  
**130**

To keep off mildews, and all weather harms :  
Strange ministrant of undescribed sounds,  
That come a swooning over hollow grounds,  
And wither drearily on barren moors :  
Dread opener of the mysterious doors  
Leading to universal knowledge—see,  
Great son of Dryope,  
The many that are come to pay their vows  
With leaves about their brows !

PART IV  
ii

V

Be still the unimaginable lodge  
For solitary thinkings ; such as dodge  
Conception to the very bourne of heaven,  
Then leave the naked brain : be still the leaven,  
That spreading in this dull and clodded earth  
Gives it a touch ethereal—a new birth :  
Be still a symbol of immensity ;  
A firmament reflected in 'a sea ;  
An element filling the space between ;  
An unknown—but no more : we humbly screen  
With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly bending,  
And giving out a shout most heaven rending,  
Conjure thee to receive our humble Pæan,  
Upon thy Mount Lycean !

PART IV

iii

O SORROW,

Why dost borrow

The natural hue of health, from vermeil lips ?

To give maiden blushes

To the white rose bushes ?

Or is it thy dewy hand the daisy tips ?

O Sorrow,

Why dost borrow

The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye ?

To give the glow-worm light ?

Or, on a moonless night,

To tinge, on syren shores, the salt sea-spry ?

O Sorrow,

Why dost borrow

The mellow ditties from a mourning tongue ?

To give at evening pale

Unto the nightingale,

That thou mayst listen the cold dews among ?

O Sorrow,

Why dost borrow

Heart's lightness from the merriment of May ?

A lover would not tread

A cowslip on the head,

Though he should dance from eve till peep of day ;

Nor any drooping flower

Held sacred for thy bower,

Wherever he may sport himself and play.

PART IV

iii

To Sorrow,  
I bade good-morrow,  
And thought to leave her far away behind ;  
But cheerly, cheerly,  
She loves me dearly ;  
She is so constant to me, and so kind :  
I would deceive her,  
And so leave her,  
But ah ! she is so constant and so kind.

Beneath my palm trees, by the river side,  
I sat a weeping : in the whole world wide  
There was no one to ask me why I wept ;  
And 'so I kept  
Brimming the water-lily cups with tears  
Cold as my fears.

Beneath my palm trees, by the river side,  
I sat a weeping : what enamour'd bride,  
Cheated by shadowy wooer from the clouds,  
But hides and shrouds  
Beneath dark palm trees by a river side ?

And as I sat, over the light blue hills  
There came a noise of revellers : the rills  
Into the wide stream came of purple hue—  
'Twas Bacchus and his crew !

**PART IV** The earnest trumpet spake, and silver thrills

iii From kissing cymbals made a merry din—

’Twas Bacchus and his kin !

Like to a moving vintage down they came,

Crown’d with green leaves, and faces all on flame ;

All madly dancing through the pleasant valley,

To scare thee, Melancholy !

O then, O then, thou wast a simple name !

And I forgot thee, as the berried holly

By shepherds is forgotten, when, in June,

Tall chestnuts keep away the sun and moon :

I rush’d into the folly !

Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus stood,

Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mood,

With sidelong laughing ;

And little rills of crimson wine imbruued

His plump white arms, and shoulders, enough white

For Venus’ pearly bite :

And near him rode Silenus on his ass,

Pelted with flowers as he on did pass

Tipsily quaffing.

Whence came ye, merry Damsels ! whence came ye !

So many, and so many, and such glee ?

Why have ye left your bowers desolate,

    Your lutes, and gentler fate ?

We follow Bacchus ! Bacchus on the wing,

A conquering !

Bacchus, young Bacchus ! good or ill betide,  
 We dance before him, thorough kingdoms wide !  
 Come hither, lady fair, and joined be  
 To our wild minstrelsy !

Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs ! whence came ye !  
 So many, and so many, and such glee ?  
 Why have ye left your forest haunts, why left ?  
 Your nuts in oak-tree cleft ?  
 For wine, for wine we left our kernel tree ;  
 For wine we left our heath, and yellow brooms,  
 And cold mushrooms ;  
 For wine we follow Bacchus through the earth ;  
 Great God of breathless cups and chirping mirth !  
 Come hither, lady fair, and joined be  
 To our mad minstrelsy !

Over wide streams and mountains great we went,  
 And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent,  
 Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,  
 With Asian elephants :  
 Onward these myriads—with song and dance,  
 With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians' prance,  
 Web-footed alligators, crocodiles,  
 Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,  
 Plump infant laughers mimicking the coil  
 Of seamen, and stout galley-rowers' toil :  
 With toying oars and silken sails they glide,  
 Nor care for wind and tide.

**PART IV** Mounted on panthers' furs and lions' manes,  
iii From rear to van they scour about the plains ;  
A three days' journey in a moment done :  
And always, at the rising of the sun,  
About the wilds they hunt with spear and horn,  
On spleenful unicorn.

I saw Osirian Egypt kneel adown  
Before the vine-wreath crown !  
I saw parch'd Abyssinia rouse and sing  
To the silver cymbals' ring !  
I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce  
Old Tartary the fierce !  
The kings of Inde their jewel-sceptres vail,  
And from their treasures scatter pearl'd hail ;  
Great Brahma from his mystic heaven groans,  
And all his priesthood moans ;  
Before young Bacchus' eye-wink turning pale.  
Into these regions came I, following him,  
Sick-hearted, weary—so I took a whim  
To stray away into these forests drear  
Alone, without a peer :  
And I have told thee all thou mayest hear.

Young stranger !  
I've been a ranger  
In search of pleasure throughout every clime :  
Alas ! 'tis not for me :  
Bewitch'd I sure must be,

To lose in grieving all my maiden prime.

PART IV

iii

Come then, Sorrow !

Sweetest Sorrow !

Like an own babe I nurse thee on my breast :

I thought to leave thee

And deceive thee,

But now of all the world I love thee best.

There is not one,

No, no, not one

But thee to comfort a poor lonely maid ;

Thou art her mother,

And her brother,

Her playmate, and her wooer in the shade.

# I

**PART IV** MY heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains  
iv My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,  
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains  
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :  
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,  
But being too happy in thy happiness,  
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,  
In some melodious plot  
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,  
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

# II

O, for a draught of vintage ! that hath been  
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,  
Tasting of Flora and the country green,  
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth !  
O for a beaker full of the warm South,  
Full of the true, the blushing Hippocrene,  
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,  
And purple-stained mouth ;  
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,  
And with thee fade away into the forest dim :

# III

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
What thou among the leaves hast never known,  
The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;  
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,  
138

Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies ;  
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow  
And leaden-eyed despairs,  
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

PART IV

iv

#### IV

Away ! away ! for I will fly to thee,  
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,  
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards :  
Already with thee ! tender is the night,  
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,  
Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays ;  
But here there is no light,  
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown  
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

#### V

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,  
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet  
Wherewith the seasonable month endows  
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild ;  
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine ;  
Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves ;  
And mid-May's eldest child,  
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,  
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

## VI

PART IV Darkling I listen ; and, for many a time  
iv I have been half in love with easeful Death,  
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,  
To take into the air my quiet breath ;  
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,  
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,  
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad  
In such an ecstasy !  
Still wouldest thou sing, and I have ears in vain—  
To thy high requiem become a sod.

## VII

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird !  
No hungry generations tread thee down ;  
The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
In ancient days by emperor and clown :  
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path  
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
She stood in tears amid the alien corn ;  
The same that oft-times hath  
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

## VIII

Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell  
To toll me back from thee to my sole self !  
Adieu ! the fancy cannot cheat so well  
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.  
Adieu ! adieu ! thy plaintive anthem fades

PART IV  
iv

Past the near meadows, over the still stream,  
Up the hill-side ; and now 'tis buried deep  
    In the next valley-glades :  
Was it a vision, or a waking dream ?  
Fled is that music :—Do I wake or sleep ?

# I

**PART IV** THOU still unravish'd bride of quietness,  
v                   Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,  
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express  
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme :  
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape  
Of deities or mortals, or of both,  
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady ?  
What men or gods are these ? What maidens loth ?  
What mad pursuit ? What struggle to escape ?  
What pipes and timbrels ? What wild ecstasy ?

# II

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
Are sweeter ; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on ;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,  
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone :  
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave  
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare ;  
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,  
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve ;  
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,  
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair !

# III

Ah, happy, happy boughs ! that cannot shed  
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu ;  
And, happy melodist, unwearied,  
For ever piping songs for ever new ;  
More happy love ! more happy, happy love !

For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,

PART IV

▼

For ever panting, and for ever young ;  
All breathing human passion far above,

That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,  
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

IV

Who are these coming to the sacrifice ?

To what green altar, O mysterious priest,  
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,

And all her silken flanks with garlands drest ?

What little town by river or sea-shore,

Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,

Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn ?

And, little town, thy streets for evermore

Will silent be ; and not a soul to tell

Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

V

O Attic shape ! Fair attitude ! with brede

Of marble men and maidens overwrought,

With forest branches and the trodden weed ;

Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought

As doth eternity : Cold Pastoral !

When old age shall this generation waste,

Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe

Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,

Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

## I

PART IV O GODDESS ! hear these tuneless numbers, wrung  
 vi By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear,  
 And pardon that thy secrets should be sung  
 Even into thine own soft-conched ear :  
 Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see  
 The winged Psyche with awaken'd eyes ?  
 I wander'd in a forest thoughtlessly,  
 And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,  
 Saw two fair creatures, couched side by side  
 In deepest grass, beneath the whisp'ring roof  
 Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where there ran  
 A brooklet, scarce espied :

## II

'Mid hush'd, cool-rooted flowers, fragrant-eyed,  
 Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,  
 They lay calm-breathing on the bedded grass ;  
 Their arms embraced, and their pinions too ;  
 Their lips touch'd not, but had not bade adieu,  
 As if disjoined by soft-handed slumber,  
 And ready still past kisses to outnumber  
 At tender eye-dawn of aurorean love :  
 The winged boy I knew ;  
 But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove ?  
 His Psyche true !

## III

O latest born and loveliest vision far  
 Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy !

Fairer than Phœbe's sapphire-region'd star,  
 Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the sky ;  
 Fairer than these, though temple thou hast none  
     Nor altar heap'd with flowers ;  
 Nor virgin-choir to make delicious moan  
     Upon the midnight hours ;  
 No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense sweet  
     From chain-swung censer teeming ;  
 No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat  
     Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

## IV

O brightest ! though too late for antique vows,  
 Too, too late for the fond believing lyre,  
 When holy were the haunted forest boughs,  
     Holy the air, the water, and the fire ;  
 Yet even in these days so far retired  
     From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,  
     Fluttering among the faint Olympians,  
 I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspir'd.  
     So let me be thy choir, and make a moan  
     Upon the midnight hours ;  
 Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense sweet  
     From swinged censer teeming ;  
 Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy heat  
     Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

## V

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane

PART IV

vi In some untrodden region of my mind,  
Where branched thoughts, new grown with pleasant  
Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind : [pain,  
Far, far around shall those dark cluster'd trees  
Fledge the wild-ridged mountains steep by steep ;  
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,  
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lull'd to sleep ;  
And in the midst of this wide quietness  
A rosy sanctuary will I dress  
With the wreath'd trellis of a working brain,  
With buds, and bells, and stars without a name,  
With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,  
Who breeding flowers, will never breed the same,  
And there shall be for thee all soft delight  
That shadowy thought can win,  
A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,  
To let the warm Love in !

EVER let the Fancy roam,  
Pleasure never is at home :  
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,  
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth ;  
Then let winged Fancy wander  
Through the thought still spread beyond her :  
Open wide the mind's cage-door,  
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.

PART IV

vii

¶ O sweet Fancy ! let her loose ;  
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,  
And the enjoying of the Spring  
Fades as does its blossoming ;  
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,  
Blushing through the mist and dew,  
Cloys with tasting : What do then ?  
Sit thee by the ingle, when  
The sear faggot blazes bright,  
Spirit of a winter's night ;  
When the soundless earth is muffled,  
And the caked snow is shuffled  
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon ;  
When the Night doth meet the Noon  
In a dark conspiracy  
To banish Even from her sky.  
Sit thee there, and send abroad  
With a mind self-overawed,  
Fancy, high-commission'd :—send her !  
She has vassals to attend her :

PART IV

vii

She will bring, in spite of frost,  
Beauties that the earth hath lost ;  
She will bring thee, all together,  
All delights of summer weather ;  
All the buds and bells of May,  
From dewy sward or thorny spray ;  
All the heaped Autumn's wealth,  
With a still, mysterious stealth :  
She will mix these pleasures up  
Like three fit wines in a cup,  
And thou shalt quaff it :—thou shalt hear  
Distant harvest-carols clear ;  
Rustle of the reaped corn ;  
Sweet birds antheming the morn :  
And, in the same moment—hark !  
'Tis the early April lark,  
Or the rooks, with busy caw,  
Foraging for sticks and straw.  
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold  
The daisy and the marigold ;  
White-plumed lilies, and the first  
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst ;  
Shaded hyacinth, alway  
Sapphire queen of the mid-May ;  
And every leaf, and every flower  
Pearled with the self-same shower.  
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep  
Meagre from its celled sleep ;  
And the snake all winter-thin

Cast on sunny bank its skin ;  
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see  
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,  
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest  
Quiet on her mossy nest ;  
Then the hurry and alarm  
When the bee-hive casts its swarm ;  
Acorns ripe down-pattering,  
While the autumn breezes sing.

¶ Oh, sweet Fancy ! let her loose ;  
Every thing is spoilt by use :  
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,  
Too much gazed at ? Where's the maid  
Whose lip mature is ever new ?  
Where's the eye, however blue,  
Doth not weary ? Where's the face  
One would meet in every place ?  
Where's the voice, however soft,  
One would hear so very oft ?  
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth  
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.  
Let, then, winged Fancy find  
Thee a mistress to thy mind :  
Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter,  
Ere the God of Torment taught her  
How to frown and how to chide ;  
With a waist and with a side  
White as Hebe's, when her zone

PART IV  
vii

PART IV

vii

Slipt its golden clasp, and down  
Fell her kirtle to her feet,  
While she held the goblet sweet,  
And Jove grew languid.—Break the mesh  
Of the Fancy's silken leash ;  
Quickly break her prison-string  
And such joys as these she'll bring.

¶ Let the winged Fancy roam,  
Pleasure never is at home.

BARDS of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth !  
Have ye souls in heaven too,  
Double-lived in regions new ?

¶ Yes, and those of heaven commune  
With the spheres of sun and moon ;  
With the noise of fountains wond'rous,  
And the parle of voices thund'rous ;  
With the whisper of heaven's trees  
And one another, in soft ease  
Seated on Elysian lawns  
Brows'd by none but Dian's fawns ;  
Underneath large blue-bells tented,  
Where the daisies are rose-scented,  
And the rose herself has got  
Perfume which on earth is not ;  
Where the nightingale doth sing  
Not a senseless, tranced thing,  
But divine melodious truth ;  
Philosophic numbers smooth ;  
Tales and golden histories  
Of heaven and its mysteries.

¶ Thus ye live on high, and then  
On the earth ye live again ;  
And the souls ye left behind you  
Teach us, here, the way to find you,  
Where your other souls are joying,

## PART IV

viii

Never slumber'd, never cloying.  
Here, your earth-born souls still speak  
To mortals, of their little week ;  
Of their sorrows and delights ;  
Of their passions and their spites ;  
Of their glory and their shame ;  
What doth strengthen and what maim.  
Thus ye teach us, every day,  
Wisdom, though fled far away.

¶ Bards of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth !  
Ye have souls in heaven too,  
Double-lived in regions new !

SOULS of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern ?

PART IV  
ix

¶ Have ye tippled drink more fine  
Than mine host's Canary wine ?  
Or are fruits of Paradise  
Sweeter than those dainty pies  
Of venison ? O generous food !  
Drest as though bold Robin Hood  
Would, with his maid Marian,  
Sup and bowse from horn and can.

¶ I have heard that on a day  
Mine host's sign-board flew away,  
Nobody knew whither, till  
An astrologer's old quill  
To a sheepskin gave the story,  
Said he saw you in your glory,  
Underneath a new old-sign  
Sipping beverage divine,  
And pledging with contented smack  
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

¶ Souls of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern ?

NO ! those days are gone away,  
And their hours are old and gray,  
And their minutes buried all  
Under the down-trodden pall  
Of the leaves of many years :  
Many times have winter's shears,  
Frozen North, and chilling East,  
Sounded tempests to the feast  
Of the forests' whispering fleeces,  
Since men knew nor rent nor leases.

¶ No, the bugle sounds no more,  
And the twanging bow no more ;  
Silent is the ivory shrill  
Past the heath and up the hill ;  
There is no mid-forest laugh,  
Where lone Echo gives the half  
To some wight, amazed to hear  
Jesting, deep in forest drear.

¶ On the fairest time of June  
You may go, with sun or moon,  
Or the seven stars to light you,  
Or the polar ray to right you ;  
But you never may behold  
Little John, or Robin bold ;  
Never one, of all the clan,  
Thrumming on an empty can  
Some old hunting ditty, while

He doth his green way beguile  
To fair hostess Merriment,  
Down beside the pasture Trent ;  
For he left the merry tale,  
Messenger for spicy ale.

¶ Gone, the merry morris din ;  
Gone, the song of Gamelyn ;  
Gone, the tough-belted outlaw  
Idling in the “ grenè shawe ” ;  
All are gone away and past !  
And if Robin should be cast  
Sudden from his turfèd grave,  
And if Marian should have  
Once again her forest days,  
She would weep, and he would craze :  
He would swear, for all his oaks,  
Fallen beneath the dockyard strokes,  
Have rotted on the briny seas ;  
She would weep that her wild bees  
Sang not to her—strange ! that honey  
Can’t be got without hard money !

¶ So it is : yet let us sing,  
Honour to the old bow-string !  
Honour to the bugle-horn !  
Honour to the woods unshorn !  
Honour to the Lincoln green !  
Honour to the archer keen !

PART IV  
x

Honour to tight Little John  
And the horse he rode upon !  
Honour to bold Robin Hood,  
Sleeping in the underwood !  
Honour to Maid Marian,  
And to all the Sherwood-clan !  
Though their days have hurried by,  
Let us two a burden try.

# I

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun ;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run ;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core ;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel ; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease,  
For Summer has o'erbrimmed their clammy cells.

PART IV  
xi

# II

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store ?  
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ;  
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook  
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers :  
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep  
Steady thy laden head across a brook ;  
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,  
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

# III

Where are the songs of Spring ? Ay, where are they ?  
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—  
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,  
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue ;

PART IV Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn

xi        Among the river sallows, borne aloft

          Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies ;

And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ;

Hedge-crickets sing ; and now with treble soft

The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft ;

And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

# I

NO, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist  
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine ;  
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss'd  
By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine ;  
Make not your rosary of dew-berries,  
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be  
Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl  
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries ;  
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,  
And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.

# PART IV

xii

# II

But when the melancholy fit shall fall  
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,  
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,  
And hides the green hill in an April shroud ;  
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,  
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave.  
Or on the wealth of globed peonies ;  
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,  
Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,  
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.

# III

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die ;  
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips  
Bidding adieu ; and aching Pleasure nigh,  
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips :  
Ay, in the very temple of Delight

**PART IV**

xii

Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,  
Though seen of none save him whose strenuous  
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine ; [tongue  
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,  
And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

ONE morn before me were three figures seen,  
 With bowed necks, and joined hands, side-faced ;  
 And one behind the other stepp'd serene,  
 In placid sandals, and in white robes graced ;  
 They pass'd, like figures on a marble urn,  
 When shifted round to see the other side ;  
 They came again ; as when the urn once more  
 Is shifted round, the first seen shades return ;  
 And they were strange to me, as may betide  
 With vases, to one deep in Phidian lore.

How is it, Shadows ! that I knew ye not ?  
 How came ye muffled in so hush a mask ?  
 Was it a silent deep-disguised plot  
 To steal away, and leave without a task  
 My idle days ? Ripe was the drowsy hour ;  
 The blissful cloud of summer-indolence  
 Benumb'd my eyes ; my pulse grew less and less ;  
 Pain had no sting, and pleasure's wreath no flower :  
 O, why did ye not melt, and leave my sense  
 Unhaunted quite of all but—nothingness ?

A third time pass'd they by, and, passing, turn'd  
 Each one the face a moment whiles to me ;  
 Then faded, and to follow them I burn'd,  
 And ach'd for wings, because I knew the three ;  
 The first was a fair Maid and Love her name ;

PART IV      The second was Ambition, pale of cheek,  
xiii      And ever watchful with fatigued eye ;  
            The last, whom I love more, the more of blame  
            Is heap'd upon her, maiden most unmeek,  
I knew to be my demon Poesy.

#### IV

They faded, and, forsooth ! I wanted wings :  
O folly ! What is Love ? and where is it ?  
And for that poor Ambition ! it springs  
From a man's little heart's short fever-fit ;  
For Poesy !—no,—she has not a joy,—  
At least for me,—so sweet as drowsy noons,  
And evenings steep'd in honey'd indolence ;  
O, for an age so shelter'd from annoy,  
That I may never know how change the moons,  
Or hear the voice of busy common-sense !

#### V

And once more came they by ;—alas ! wherefore ?  
My sleep had been embroider'd with dim dreams ;  
My soul had been a lawn besprinkled o'er  
With flowers, and stirring shades, and baffled beams :  
The morn was clouded, but no shower fell,  
Tho' in her lids hung the sweet tears of May ;  
The open casement press'd a new-leav'd vine,  
Let in the budding warmth and throstle's lay ;  
O Shadows ! 'twas a time to bid farewell !  
Upon your skirts had fallen no tears of mine.

So, ye three Ghosts, adieu ! Ye cannot raise  
My head cool-bedded in the flowery grass ;  
For I would not be dieted with praise,  
A pet-lamb in a sentimental farce !  
Fade softly from my eyes, and be once more  
In masque-like figures on the dreamy urn ;  
Farewell ! I yet have visions for the night,  
And for the day faint visions there is store ;  
Vanish, ye Phantoms ! from my idle spright,  
Into the clouds, and never more return !

PART IV O THOU ! whose face hath felt the Winter's wind,

xiv Whose eye hath seen the snow-clouds hung in mist,

And the black elm-tops 'mong the freezing stars :

To thee the Spring will be a harvest-time.

O thou ! whose only book hath been the light

Of supreme darkness, which thou feddest on

Night after night, when Phœbus was away,

To thee the Spring shall be a triple morn.

O fret not after knowledge !—I have none,

And yet my song comes native with the warmth.

O fret not after knowledge !—I have none,

And yet the Evening listens. He who saddens

At thought of idleness cannot be idle,

And he's awake who thinks himself asleep.

PART V. HYPERION

- A. HYPERION: A FRAGMENT
- B. THE FALL OF HYPERION: A DREAM

PART V. A DEEP in the shady sadness of a vale

Book I

Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,  
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,  
Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,  
Still as the silence round about his lair ;  
Forest on forest hung about his head  
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,  
Not so much life as on a summer's day  
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,  
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.  
A stream went voiceless by, still deadn'd more  
By reason of his fallen divinity  
Spreading a shade : the Naiad 'mid her reeds  
Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

¶ Along the margin-sand large foot-marks went  
No further than to where his feet had stray'd,  
And slept there since. Upon the sodden ground  
His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,  
Unsceptred ; and his realmless eyes were closed ;  
While his bow'd head seem'd listening to the Earth,  
His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

¶ It seem'd no force could wake him from his place ;  
But there came one, who with a kindred hand  
Touch'd his wide shoulders, after bending low  
With reverence, though to one who knew it not.  
She was a Goddess of the infant world ;  
By her in stature the tall Amazon  
Had stood a pigmy's height : she would have ta'en  
Achilles by the hair and bent his neck ;

PART V. A  
Book I

Or with a finger stay'd Ixion's wheel.  
Her face was large as that of Memphian sphinx,  
Pedestal'd haply in a palace court,  
When sages look'd to Egypt for their lore.  
But oh ! how unlike marble was that face :  
How beautiful, if sorrow had not made  
Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.  
There was a listening fear in her regard,  
As if calamity had but begun ;  
As if the vanward clouds of evil days  
Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear  
Was with its stored thunder labouring up.  
One hand she press'd upon that aching spot  
Where beats the human heart, as if just there,  
Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain :  
The other upon Saturn's bended neck  
She laid, and to the level of his ear  
Leaning with parted lips, some words she spake  
In solemn tenour and deep organ-tone :  
Some mourning words, which in our feeble tongue  
Would come in these like accents ; O how frail  
To that large utterance of the early Gods !  
Saturn, look up !—though wherefore, poor old King ?  
I have no comfort for thee, no not one :  
I cannot say, O wherefore sleepest thou ?  
For heaven is parted from thee, and the earth  
Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a God ;  
And ocean too, with all its solemn noise,  
Has from thy sceptre pass'd ; and all the air

**PART V. A** Is tempted of thine hoary majesty.

Book I

Thy thunder, conscious of the new command,  
Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house ;  
And thy sharp lightning in unpractised hands  
Scorches and burns our once serene domain.  
O aching time ! O moments big as years !  
All as ye pass swell out the monstrous truth,  
And press it so upon our weary griefs  
That unbelief has not a space to breathe.  
Saturn, sleep on :—O thoughtless, why did I  
Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude ?  
Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes ?  
Saturn, sleep on ! while at thy feet I weep.  
¶ As when, upon a tranced summer-night,  
Those green-rob'd senators of mighty woods,  
Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,  
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,  
Save from one gradual solitary gust  
Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,  
As if the ebbing air had but one wave ;  
So came these words and went ; the while in tears  
She touch'd her fair large forehead to the ground,  
Just where her falling hair might be outspread  
A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet.  
One moon, with alteration slow, had shed  
Her silver seasons four upon the night,  
And still these two were postured motionless,  
Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern ;  
The frozen God still couchant on the earth,

PART V. A  
Book I

And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet :  
Until at length old Saturn lifted up  
His faded eyes, and saw his kingdom gone,  
And all the gloom and sorrow of the place,  
And that fair kneeling Goddess ; and then spake,  
As with a palsied tongue, and while his beard  
Shook horrid with such aspen-malady :  
O tender spouse of gold Hyperion,  
Thea, I feel thee ere I see thy face ;  
Look up, and let me see our doom in it ;  
Look up, and tell me if this feeble shape  
Is Saturn's ; tell me, if thou hear'st the voice  
Of Saturn ; tell me, if this wrinkling brow,  
Naked and bare of its great diadem,  
Peers like the front of Saturn. Who had power  
To make me desolate ? whence came the strength ?  
How was it nurtured to such bursting forth,  
While Fate seem'd strangled in my nervous grasp ?  
But it is so ; and I am smother'd up,  
And buried from all godlike exercise  
Of influence benign on planets pale,  
Of admonitions to the winds and seas,  
Of peaceful sway above man's harvesting,  
And all those acts which Deity supreme  
Doth ease its heart of love in.—I am gone  
Away from my own bosom : I have left  
My strong identity, my real self,  
Somewhere between the throne, and where I sit  
Here on this spot of earth. Search, Thea, search !

**PART V. A** Open thine eyes eterne, and sphere them round  
**Book I** Upon all space : space starr'd, and lorn of light ;  
Space region'd with life-air ; and barren void ;  
Spaces of fire, and all the yawn of hell.  
Search, Thea, search ! and tell me, if thou seest  
A certain shape or shadow, making way  
With wings or chariot fierce to reposess  
A heaven he lost erewhile : it must—it must  
Be of ripe progress—Saturn must be King.  
Yes, there must be a golden victory ;  
There must be Gods thrown down, and trumpets blown  
Of triumph calm, and hymns of festival  
Upon the gold clouds metropolitan,  
Voices of soft proclaim, and silver stir  
Of strings in hollow shells ; and there shall be  
Beautiful things made new, for the surprise  
Of the sky-children ; I will give command :  
Thea ! Thea ! Thea ! where is Saturn ?  
¶ This passion lifted him upon his feet,  
And made his hands to struggle in the air,  
His Druid locks to shake and ooze with sweat,  
His eyes to fever out, his voice to cease.  
He stood, and heard not Thea's sobbing deep ;  
A little time, and then again he snatch'd  
Utterance thus.—But cannot I create ?  
Cannot I form ? Cannot I fashion forth  
Another world, another universe,  
To overbear and crumble this to nought ?  
Where is another chaos ? Where ? That word

PART V. A  
Book I

Found way into Olympus, and made quake  
The rebel three.—Thea was startled up,  
And in her bearing was a sort of hope,  
As thus she quick-voiced spake, yet full of awe.

¶ This cheers our fallen house : come to our friends,  
O Saturn ! come away, and give them heart ;  
I know the covert, for thence came I hither.  
Thus brief ; then with beseeching eyes she went  
With backward footing through the shade a space :  
He follow'd, and she turn'd to lead the way  
Through aged boughs, that yieldest like the mist  
Which eagles cleave upmounting from their nest.

¶ Meanwhile in other realms big tears were shed,  
More sorrow like to this, and such like woe,  
Too huge for mortal tongue or pen of scribe :  
The Titans fierce, self-hid, or prison-bound,  
Groan'd for the old allegiance once more,  
And listen'd in sharp pain for Saturn's voice.  
But one of the whole mammoth-brood still kept  
His sovereignty, and rule, and majesty ;  
Blazing Hyperion on his orbed fire  
Still sat, still snuff'd the incense, teeming up  
From man to the sun's God ; yet unsecure :  
For as among us mortals omens drear  
Fright and perplex, so also shudder'd he ;  
Not at dog's howl, or gloom-bird's hated screech,  
Or the familiar visiting of one  
Upon the first toll of his passing-bell,

**PART V. A** Or prophesyings of the midnight lamp ;  
**Book I** But horrors, portion'd to a giant nerve,  
Oft made Hyperion ache. His palace bright,  
Bastion'd with pyramids of glowing gold,  
And touch'd with shade of bronzed obelisks,  
Glar'd a blood-red through all its thousand courts,  
Arches, and domes, and fiery galleries ;  
And all its curtains of Aurorean clouds  
Flush'd angrily : while sometimes eagles' wings,  
Unseen before by Gods or wondering men,  
Darken'd the place ; and neighing steeds were heard,  
Not heard before by Gods or wondering men.  
Also, when he would taste the spicy wreaths  
Of incense, breathed aloft from sacred hills,  
Instead of sweets, his ample palate took  
Savour of poisonous brass and metal sick :  
And so, when harbour'd in the sleepy west,  
After the full completion of fair day,  
For rest divine upon exalted couch  
And slumber in the arms of melody,  
He pac'd away the pleasant hours of ease  
With stride colossal, on from hall to hall ;  
While far within each aisle and deep recess,  
His winged minions in close clusters stood,  
Amazed and full of fear ; like anxious men  
Who on wide plains gather in panting troops,  
When earthquakes jar their battlements and towers.  
Even now, while Saturn, roused from icy trance,  
Went step for step with Thea through the woods,

PART V. A  
Book I

Hyperion, leaving twilight in the rear,  
Came slope upon the threshold of the west ;  
Then, as was wont, his palace-door flew ope  
In smoothest silence, save what solemn tubes,  
Blown by the serious Zephyrs, gave of sweet  
And wandering sounds, slow-breathed melodies ;  
And like a rose in vermeil tint and shape,  
In fragrance soft, and coolness to the eye,  
That inlet to severe magnificence  
Stood full blown, for the God to enter in.  
¶ He enter'd, but he enter'd full of wrath ;  
His flaming robes stream'd out beyond his heels,  
And gave a roar, as if of earthly fire,  
That scared away the meek ethereal Hours  
And made their dove-wings tremble. On he flared,  
From stately nave to nave, from vault to vault,  
Through bowers of fragrant and enwreathed light,  
And diamond-pav'd lustrous long arcades,  
Until he reach'd the great main cupola ;  
There standing fierce beneath, he stamped his foot,  
And from the basements deep to the high towers  
Jarr'd his own golden region ; and before  
The quavering thunder thereupon had ceased,  
His voice leapt out, despite of godlike curb,  
To this result : O dreams of day and night !  
O monstrous forms ! O effigies of pain !  
O spectres busy in a cold, cold gloom !  
O lank-ear'd Phantoms of black-weeded pools !  
Why do I know ye ? why have I seen ye ? why

**PART V. A** Is my eternal essence thus distraught  
**Book I** To see and to behold these horrors new ?  
Saturn is fallen, am I too to fall ?  
Am I to leave this haven of my rest,  
This cradle of my glory, this soft clime,  
This calm luxuriance of blissful light,  
These crystalline pavilions, and pure fanes,  
Of all my lucent empire ? It is left  
Deserted, void, nor any haunt of mine.  
The blaze, the splendor, and the symmetry,  
I cannot see—but darkness, death and darkness.  
Even here, into my centre of repose,  
The shady visions come to domineer,  
Insult, and blind, and stifle up my pomp.  
Fall !—No, by Tellus and her briny robes !  
Over the fiery frontier of my realms  
I will advance a terrible right arm  
Shall scare that infant thunderer, rebel Jove,  
And bid old Saturn take his throne again.  
He spake, and ceas'd, the while a heavier threat  
Held struggle with his throat but came not forth ;  
For as in theatres of crowded men  
Hubbub increases more they call out Hush !  
So at Hyperion's words the Phantoms pale  
Bestirr'd themselves, thrice horrible and cold ;  
And from the mirror'd level where he stood  
A mist arose, as from a scummy marsh.  
At this, through all his bulk an agony  
Crept gradual, from the feet unto the crown,

Like a lithe serpent vast and muscular  
Making slow way, with head and neck convulsed  
From over-strained might. Releas'd, he fled  
To the eastern gates, and full six dewy hours  
Before the dawn in season due should blush,  
He breath'd fierce breath against the sleepy portals,  
Clear'd them of heavy vapours, burst them wide  
Suddenly on the ocean's chilly streams.  
The planet orb of fire, whereon he rode  
Each day from east to west the heavens through,  
Spun round in sable curtaining of clouds ;  
Not therefore veiled quite, blindfold, and hid,  
But ever and anon the glancing spheres,  
Circles, and arcs, and broad-belting colure,  
Glow'd through, and wrought upon the muffling dark  
Sweet-shaped lightnings from the nadir deep  
Up to the zenith,—hieroglyphics old,  
Which sages and keen-eyed astrologers  
Then living on the earth, with labouring thought  
Won from the gaze of many centuries :  
Now lost, save what we find on remnants huge  
Of stone, or marble swart ; their import gone,  
Their wisdom long since fled.—Two wings this orb  
Possess'd for glory, two fair argent wings,  
Ever exalted at the God's approach :  
And now, from forth the gloom their plumes immense  
Rose, one by one, till all outspread were ;  
While still the dazzling globe maintain'd eclipse,  
Awaiting for Hyperion's command.

PART V. A Fain would he have commanded, fain took throne

Book I

And bid the day begin, if but for change.

He might not :—No, though a primeval God :

The sacred seasons might not be disturb'd.

Therefore the operations of the dawn

Stay'd in their birth, even as here 'tis told.

Those silver wings expanded sisterly,

Eager to sail their orb ; the porches wide

Open'd upon the dusk demesnes of night ;

And the bright Titan, frenzied with new woes,

Unused to bend, by hard compulsion bent

His spirit to the sorrow of the time ;

And all along a dismal rack of clouds,

Upon the boundaries of day and night,

He stretch'd himself in grief and radiance faint.

There as he lay, the Heaven with its stars

Look'd down on him with pity, and the voice

Of Cœlus, from the universal space,

Thus whisper'd low and solemn in his ear.

O brightest of my children dear, earth-born

And sky-engender'd, Son of Mysteries :

All unrevealed even to the powers

Which met at thy creating ; at whose joys

And palpitations sweet, and pleasures soft,

I, Cœlus, wonder, how they came and whence ;

And at the fruits thereof what shapes they be,

Distinct, and visible ; symbols divine,

Manifestations of that beauteous life

Diffus'd unseen throughout eternal space :

PART V. A  
Book I

Of these new-form'd art thou, oh brightest child !  
Of these, thy brethren and the Goddesses !  
There is sad feud among ye, and rebellion  
Of son against his sire. I saw him fall,  
I saw my first-born tumbled from his throne !  
To me his arms were spread, to me his voice  
Found way from forth the thunders round his head !  
Pale wox I, and in vapours hid my face.  
Art thou, too, near such doom ? vague fear there is :  
For I have seen my sons most unlike Gods.  
Divine ye were created, and divine  
In sad demeanour, solemn, undisturb'd,  
Unruffled, like high Gods, ye lived and ruled :  
Now I behold in you fear, hope, and wrath ;  
Actions of rage and passion ; even as  
I see them, on the mortal world beneath,  
In men who die.—This is the grief, O Son !  
Sad sign of ruin, sudden dismay, and fall !  
Yet do thou strive ; as thou art capable,  
As thou canst move about, an evident God ;  
And canst oppose to each malignant hour  
Ethereal presence :—I am but a voice ;  
My life is but the life of winds and tides,  
No more than winds and tides can I avail :  
But thou canst.—Be thou therefore in the van  
Of circumstance ; yea, seize the arrow's barb  
Before the tense string murmur.—To the earth !  
For there thou wilt find Saturn, and his woes.  
Meantime I will keep watch on thy bright sun.

PART V. A And of the seasons be a careful nurse.

Book I Ere half this region-whisper had come down,  
Hyperion arose, and on the stars  
Lifted his curved lips, and kept them wide  
Until it ceased ; and still he kept them wide.  
And still they were the same bright, patient stars.  
Then with a slow incline of his broad breast,  
Like to a diver in the pearly seas,  
Forward he stoop'd over the airy shore,  
And plunged all noiseless into the deep night.

JUST at the self-same beat of Time's wide wings  
Hyperion slid into the rustled air,  
And Saturn gain'd with Thea that sad place  
Where Cybele and the bruised Titans mourn'd.  
It was a den where no insulting light  
Could glimmer on their tears ; where their own groans  
They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar  
Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents hoarse,  
Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where.  
Crag jutting forth to crag, and rocks that seem'd  
Ever as if just rising from a sleep,  
Forehead to Forehead held their monstrous horns ;  
And thus in thousand hugest phantasies  
Made a fit roofing to this nest of woe.  
Instead of thrones, hard flint they sat upon,  
Couches of rugged stone, and slaty ridge  
Stubborn'd with iron. All were not assembled :  
Some chain'd in torture, and some wandering.  
Cœus, and Gyges, and Briareüs,  
Typhon, and Dolor, and Porphyriion,  
With many more, the brawniest in assault,  
Were pent in regions of laborious breath ;  
Dungeon'd in opaque element, to keep  
Their clenched teeth still clench'd, and all their limbs  
Lock'd up like veins of metal, cramp't and screw'd ;  
Without a motion, save of their big hearts  
Heaving in pain, and horribly convuls'd  
With sanguine feverous boiling gurge of pulse.  
Mnemosyne was straying in the world ;

PART V. A  
Book II

**PART V. A** Far from her moon had Phœbe wandered ;  
**Book II** And many else were free to roam abroad,  
But for the main, here found they covert drear.  
Scarce images of life, one here, one there,  
Lay vast and edgeways ; like a dismal cirque  
Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,  
When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,  
In dull November, and their chancel vault,  
The Heaven itself, is blinded throughout night.  
Each one kept shroud, nor to his neighbour gave  
Or word, or look, or action of despair.  
Creüs was one ; his ponderous iron mace  
Lay by him, and a shatter'd rib of rock  
Told of his rage, ere he thus sank and pined.  
Iäpetus another ; in his grasp,  
A serpent's splashy neck ; its barbed tongue  
Squeezed from the gorge, and all its uncurl'd length  
Dead ; and because the creature could not spit  
Its poison in the eyes of conquering Jove.  
Next Cottus : prone he lay, chin uppermost,  
As though in pain ; for still upon the flint  
He ground severe his skull, with open mouth  
And eyes at horrid waking. Nearest him  
Asia, born of most enormous Caf,  
Who cost her mother Tellus keener pangs,  
Though feminine, than any of her sons :  
More thought than woe was in her dusky face,  
For she was prophesying of her glory ;  
And in her wide imagination stood

PART V. A  
Book II

Palm-shaded temples, and high rival fanes,  
By Oxus or in Ganges' sacred isles.  
Even as Hope upon her anchor leans,  
So leant she, not so fair, upon a tusk  
Shed from the broadest of her elephants.  
Above her, on a crag's uneasy shelve,  
Upon his elbow rais'd, all prostrate else,  
Shadow'd Enceladus ; once tame and mild  
As grazing ox unworried in the meads ;  
Now tiger-passion'd, lion-thoughted, wroth,  
He meditated, plotted, and even now  
Was hurling mountains in that second war,  
Not long delay'd, that scared the younger Gods  
To hide themselves in forms of beast and bird.  
Not far hence Atlas ; and beside him prone  
Phorcus, the Sire of Gorgons. Neighbour'd close  
Oceanus, and Tethys, in whose lap  
Sobb'd Clymene among her tangled hair.  
In midst of all lay Themis, at the feet  
Of Ops the queen all clouded round from sight :  
No shape distinguishable, more than when  
Thick night confounds the pine-tops with the clouds :  
And many else whose names may not be told.  
For when the Muse's wings are air-ward spread,  
Who shall delay her flight ? And she must chant  
Of Saturn, and his guide, who now had climb'd  
With damp and slippery footing from a depth  
More horrid still. Above a sombre cliff  
Their heads appear'd, and up their stature grew

PART V. A Till on the level height their steps found ease :  
Book II Then Thea spread abroad her trembling arms  
Upon the precincts of this nest of pain.  
And sidelong fix'd her eye on Saturn's face :  
There saw she direst strife ; the supreme God  
At war with all the frailty of grief,  
Of rage, of fear, anxiety, revenge,  
Remorse, spleen, hope, but most of all despair.  
Against these plagues he strove in vain ; for Fate  
Had pour'd a mortal oil upon his head,  
A disanointing poison : so that Thea,  
Afrighted, kept her still, and let him pass  
First onwards in, among the fallen tribe.  
¶ As with us mortal men, the laden heart  
Is persecuted more, and fever'd more,  
When it is nighing to the mournful house  
Where other hearts are sick of the same bruise ;  
So Saturn, as he walk'd into the midst,  
Felt faint, and would have sunk among the rest,  
But that he met Enceladus's eye,  
Whose mightiness, and awe of him, at once  
Came like an inspiration ; and he shouted,  
Titans, behold your God ! at which some groan'd ;  
Some started on their feet ; some also shouted ;  
Some wept, some wail'd, all bow'd with reverence ;  
And Ops, uplifting her black folded veil,  
Show'd her pale cheeks, and all her forehead wan,  
Her eye-brows thin and jet, and hollow eyes.  
There is a roaring in the bleak-grown pines

PART V. A  
Book II

When Winter lifts his voice ; there is a noise  
Among immortals when a God gives sign,  
With hushing finger, how he means to load  
His tongue with the full weight of utterless thought,  
With thunder, and with music, and with pomp :  
Such noise is like the roar of bleak-grown pines ;  
Which, when it ceases in this mountain'd world,  
No other sound succeeds ; but ceasing here,  
Among these fallen, Saturn's voice therefrom  
Grew up like organ, that begins anew  
Its strain, when other harmonies, stopt short,  
Leave the dinn'd air vibrating silverly.  
Thus grew it up—Not in my own sad breast,  
Which is its own great judge and searcher out,  
Can I find reason why ye should be thus :  
Not in the legends of the first of days,  
Studied from that old spirit-leaved book  
Which starry Uranus with finger bright  
Sav'd from the shores of darkness, when the waves  
Low-ebb'd still hid it up in shallow gloom ;  
And the which book ye know I ever kept  
For my firm-based footstool :—Ah, infirm !  
Not there, nor in sign, symbol, or portent  
Of element, earth, water, air, and fire,  
At war, at peace, or inter-quarrelling  
One against one, or two, or three, or all,  
Each several one against the other three,  
As fire with air loud warring when rain-floods  
Drown both, and press them both against earth's face,

**PART V. A** Where, finding sulphur, a quadruple wrath  
**Book II** Unhinges the poor world ;—not in that strife,  
Wherfrom I take strange lore, and read it deep,  
Can I find reason why ye should be thus :  
No, no-where can unriddle, though I search,  
And pore on Nature's universal scroll  
Even to swooning, why ye, Divinities,  
The first-born of all shaped and palpable Gods,  
Should cower beneath what, in comparison,  
Is untremendous might. Yet ye are here,  
O'erwhelmed, and spurn'd, and batter'd, ye are here !  
O Titans, shall I say Arise !—Ye groan :  
Shall I say Crouch !—Ye groan. What can I then ?  
O Heaven wide ! O unseen parent dear !  
What can I ? Tell me, all ye brethren Gods,  
How we can war, how engine our great wrath !  
O speak your counsel now, for Saturn's ear  
Is all a-hunger'd. Thou, Oceanus,  
Ponderest high and deep ; and in thy face  
I see, astonished, that severe content  
Which comes of thought and musing : give us help !  
¶ So ended Saturn ; and the God of the Sea,  
Sophist and sage, from no Athenian grove,  
But cogitation in his watery shades,  
Arose, with locks not oozy, and began,  
In murmurs, which his first-endeavouring tongue  
Caught infant-like from the far-foamed sands.  
O ye, whom wrath consumes ! who, passion-stung,  
Writhe at defeat, and nurse your agonies !

Shut up your senses, stifle up your ears,  
My voice is not a bellows unto ire.  
Yet listen, ye who will, whilst I bring proof  
How ye, perforce, must be content to stoop :  
And in the proof much comfort will I give,  
If ye will take that comfort in its truth.  
We fall by course of Nature's law, not force  
Of thunder, or of Jove. Great Saturn, thou  
Has sifted well the atom-universe ;  
But for this reason, that thou art the King,  
And only blind from sheer supremacy,  
One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,  
Through which I wander'd to eternal truth.  
And first, as thou wast not the first of powers,  
So art thou not the last ; it cannot be :  
Thou art not the beginning nor the end.  
From chaos and parental darkness came  
Light, the first fruits of that intestine broil,  
That sullen ferment, which for wondrous ends  
Was ripening in itself. The ripe hour came,  
And with it light, and light, engendering  
Upon its own producer, forthwith touch'd  
The whole enormous matter into life.  
Upon that very hour, our parentage,  
The Heavens and the Earth, were manifest :  
Then thou first-born, and we the giant-race,  
Found ourselves ruling new and beauteous realms.  
Now comes the pain of truth, to whom 'tis pain ;  
O folly ! for to bear all naked truths,

PART V. A And to envisage circumstance, all calm,  
Book II That is the top of sovereignty. Mark well !  
As Heaven and Earth are fairer, fairer far  
Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though once chiefs ;  
And as we show beyond that Heaven and Earth  
In form and shape compact and beautiful,  
In will, in action free, companionship,  
And thousand other signs of purer life ;  
So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,  
A power more strong in beauty, born of us  
And fated to excel us, as we pass  
In glory that old Darkness : nor are we  
Thereby more conquer'd, than by us the rule  
Of shapeless Chaos. Say, doth the dull soil  
Quarrel with the proud forests it hath fed,  
And feedeth still, more comely than itself ?  
Can it deny the chiefdom of green groves ?  
Or shall the tree be envious of the dove  
Because it cooeth, and hath snowy wings  
To wander wherewithal and find its joys ?  
We are such forest-trees, and our fair boughs  
Have bred forth, not pale solitary doves,  
But eagles golden-feather'd, who do tower  
Above us in their beauty, and must reign  
In right thereof ; for 'tis the eternal law  
The first in beauty should be first in might :  
Yea, by that law, another race may drive  
Our conquerors to mourn as we do now.  
Have ye beheld the young God of the Seas,

My dispossessor ? Have ye seen his face ?  
Have ye beheld his chariot, foam'd along  
By noble winged creatures he hath made ?  
I saw him on the calmed waters scud,  
With such a glow of beauty in his eyes,  
That it enforced me to bid sad farewell  
To all my empire : farewell sad I took,  
And hither came, to see how dolorous fate  
Had wrought upon ye ; and how I might best  
Give consolation in this woe extreme.

Receive the truth, and let it be your balm.

¶ Whether through pozed conviction, or disdain,  
They guarded silence, when Oceanus  
Left murmuring, what deepest thought can tell ?  
But so it was, none answer'd for a space,  
Save one whom none regarded, Clymene ;  
And yet she answer'd not, only complain'd,  
With hectic lips, and eyes up-looking mild,  
Thus wording timidly among the fierce :  
O Father, I am here the simplest voice,  
And all my knowledge is that joy is gone,  
And this thing woe crept in among our hearts,  
There to remain for ever, as I fear :  
I would not bode of evil, if I thought  
So weak a creature could turn off the help  
Which by just right should come of mighty Gods ;  
Yet let me tell my sorrow, let me tell  
Of what I heard, and how it made me weep,  
And know that we had parted from all hope.

**PART V. A** I stood upon a shore, a pleasant shore,  
**Book II** Where a sweet clime was breathed from a land  
Of fragrance, quietness, and trees, and flowers.  
Full of calm joy it was, as I of grief ;  
Too full of joy and soft delicious warmth ;  
So that I felt a movement in my heart  
To chide, and to reproach that solitude  
With songs of misery, music of our woes ;  
And sat me down, and took a mouthed shell  
And murmur'd into it, and made melody ;  
O melody no more ! for while I sang,  
And with poor skill let pass into the breeze  
The dull shell's echo, from a bowery strand  
Just opposite, an island of the sea,  
There came enchantment with the shifting wind,  
That did both drown and keep alive my ears.  
I threw my shell away upon the sand,  
And a wave fill'd it, as my sense was fill'd  
With that new blissful golden melody.  
A living death was in each gush of sounds,  
Each family of rapturous hurried notes,  
That fell, one after one, yet all at once,  
Like pearl beads dropping sudden from their string :  
And then another, then another strain,  
Each like a dove leaving its olive perch,  
With music wing'd instead of silent plumes,  
To hover round my head, and make me sick  
Of joy and grief at once. Grief overcame,  
And I was stopping up my frantic ears,

When, past all hindrance of my trembling hands,  
A voice came sweeter, sweeter than all tune,  
And still it cried, Apollo ! young Apollo !  
The morning-bright Apollo ! young Apollo !  
I fled, it follow'd me, and cried Apollo !  
O Father, and O Brethren, had ye felt  
Those pains of mine ; O Saturn, hadst thou felt,  
Ye would not call this too indulged tongue  
Presumptuous, in thus venturing to be heard.  
¶ So far her voice flow'd on, like timorous brook  
That, lingering along a pebbled coast,  
Doth fear to meet the sea : but sea it met,  
And shudder'd ; for the overwhelming voice  
Of huge Enceladus swallow'd it in wrath :  
The ponderous syllables, like sullen waves  
In the half-glutted hollows of reef-rocks,  
Came booming thus, while still upon his arm  
He lean'd ; not rising, from supreme contempt.  
Or shall we listen to the over-wise,  
Or to the over-foolish Giant-Gods ?  
Not thunderbolt on thunderbolt, till all  
That rebel Jove's whole armoury were spent,  
Not world on world upon these shoulders piled,  
Could agonize me more than baby-words  
In midst of this dethronement horrible.  
Speak ! roar ! shout ! yell ! ye sleepy Titans all.  
Do ye forget the blows, the buffets vile ?  
Are ye not smitten by a youngling arm ?  
Dost thou forget, sham Monarch of the Waves.

PART V. A    Thy scalding in the seas ?    What, have I roused  
Book II    Your spleens with so few simple words as these ?  
O joy ! for now I see ye are not lost :  
O joy ! for now I see a thousand eyes  
Wide glaring for revenge !—As this he said,  
He lifted up his stature vast, and stood,  
Still without intermission speaking thus :  
Now ye are flames, I'll tell you how to burn,  
And purge the ether of our enemies ;  
How to feed fierce the crooked stings of fire,  
And singe away the swollen clouds of Jove,  
Stifling that puny essence in its tent.  
O let him feel the evil he hath done ;  
For though I scorn Oceanus's lore,  
Much pain have I for more than loss of realms :  
The days of peace and slumberous calm are fled ;  
Those days, all innocent of scathing war,  
When all the fair Existences of heaven  
Came open-eyed to guess what we would speak :  
That was before our brows were taught to frown,  
Before our lips knew else but solemn sounds ;  
That was before we knew the winged thing,  
Victory, might be lost, or might be won.  
And be ye mindful that Hyperion,  
Our brightest brother, still is undisgraced ;  
Hyperion, lo ! his radiance is here !  
¶ All eyes were on Enceladus's face,  
And they beheld, while still Hyperion's name  
Flew from his lips up to the vaulted rocks,

PART V. A  
Book II

A pallid gleam across his features stern :  
Not savage, for he saw full many a God  
Wroth as himself. He look'd upon them all,  
And in each face he saw a gleam of light,  
But splendider in Saturn's, whose hoar locks  
Shone like the bubbling foam about a keel  
When the prow sweeps into a midnight cove.  
In pale and silver silence they remain'd,  
Till suddenly a splendour, like the morn,  
Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps.  
All the sad spaces of oblivion,  
And every gulf, and every chasm old,  
And every height, and every sullen depth,  
Voiceless, or hoarse with loud tormented streams :  
And all the everlasting cataracts,  
And all the headlong torrents far and near.  
Mantled before in darkness and huge shade,  
Now saw the light and made it terrible.  
It was Hyperion :—a granite peak  
His bright feet touch'd, and there he stay'd to view  
The misery his brilliance had betray'd  
To the most hateful seeing of itself.  
Golden his hair of short Numidian curl,  
Regal his shape majestic, a vast shade  
In midst of his own brightness, like the bulk  
Of Memnon's image at the set of sun  
To one who travels from the dusking East :  
Sighs, too, as mournful as that Memnon's harp,  
He utter'd, while his hands, contemplative.

PART V. A He press'd together, and in silence stood.  
Book II Despondence seized again the fallen Gods  
At sight of the dejected King of Day,  
And many hid their faces from the light :  
But fierce Enceladus sent forth his eyes  
Among the brotherhood ; and, at their glare,  
Uprose Iäpetus, and Creüs too,  
And Phorcus, sea-born, and together strode  
To where he tower'd on his eminence.  
There those four shouted forth old Saturn's name ;  
Hyperion from the peak loud answer'd, Saturn !  
Saturn sat near the mother of the Gods,  
In whose face was no joy, though all the Gods  
Gave from their hollow throats the name of SATURN !

PART V. A  
Book III

THUS, in alternate uproar and sad peace,  
Amazed were those Titans utterly.  
O leave them, Muse ! O leave them to their woes ;  
For thou art weak to sing such tumults dire :  
A solitary sorrow best befits  
Thy lips, and antheming a lonely grief.  
Leave them, O Muse ! for thou anon wilt find  
Many a fallen old Divinity  
Wandering in vain about bewilder'd shores.  
Meantime touch piously the Delphic harp,  
And not a wind of heaven but will breathe  
In aid soft warble from the Dorian flute ;  
For lo ! 'tis for the Father of all verse.  
Flush everything that hath a vermeil hue,  
Let the rose glow intense and warm the air,  
And let the clouds of even and of morn  
Float in voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills ;  
Let the red wine within the goblet boil,  
Cold as a bubbling well ; let faint-lipp'd shells  
On sands, or in great deeps, vermillion turn  
Through all their labyrinths ; and let the maid  
Blush keenly, as with some warm kiss surprised.  
Chief isle of the embowered Cyclades,  
Rejoice, O Delos, with thine olives green,  
And poplars, and lawn-shading palms, and beech,  
In which the Zephyr breathes the loudest song,  
And hazels thick, dark-stemm'd beneath the shade :  
Apollo is once more the golden theme !  
¶ Where was he, when the Giant of the Sun

**PART V. A** Stood bright, amid the sorrow of his peers ?  
**Book III** Together had he left his mother fair  
And his twin-sister sleeping in their bower,  
And in the morning twilight wandered forth  
Beside the osiers of a rivulet,  
Full ankle-deep in lilies of the vale.  
The nightingale had ceas'd, and a few stars  
Were lingering in the heavens, while the thrush  
Began calm-throated. Throughout all the isle  
There was no covert, no retired cave  
Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of waves,  
Though scarcely heard in many a green recess.  
He listen'd, and he wept, and his bright tears  
Went trickling down the golden bow he held.  
Thus with half-shut eyes he stood,  
While from beneath some cumbrous boughs hard by  
With solemn step an awful Goddess came,  
And there was purport in her looks for him,  
Which he with eager guess began to read  
Perplex'd, the while melodiously he said :  
How cam'st thou over the unfooted sea ?  
Or hath that antique mien and robed form  
Moved in these vales invisible till now ?  
Sure I have heard those vestments sweeping o'er  
The fallen leaves, when I have sat alone  
In cool mid-forest. Surely I have traced  
The rustle of those ample skirts about  
These grassy solitudes, and seen the flowers  
Lift up their heads, as still the whisper pass'd.

PART V. A  
Book III

Goddess ! I have beheld those eyes before,  
And their eternal calm, and all that face,  
Or I have dream'd.—Yes, said the supreme shape,  
Thou hast dream'd of me : and awaking up  
Didst find a lyre all golden by thy side,  
Whose strings touch'd by thy fingers, all the vast  
Unwearied ear of the whole universe  
Listen'd in pain and pleasure at the birth  
Of such new tuneful wonder. Is't not strange  
That thou shouldst weep, so gifted ? Tell me, youth,  
What sorrow thou canst feel ; for I am sad  
When thou dost shed a tear : explain thy griefs  
To one who in this lonely isle hath been  
The watcher of thy sleep and hours of life,  
From the young day when first thy infant hand  
Pluck'd witless the weak flowers, till thine arm  
Could bend that bow heroic to all times.  
Show thy heart's secret to an ancient Power  
Who hath forsaken old and sacred thrones  
For prophecies of thee, and for the sake  
Of loveliness new born.—Apollo then,  
With sudden scrutiny and gloomless eyes,  
Thus answer'd, while his white melodious throat  
Throbb'd with the syllables :—Mnemosync !  
Thy name is on my tongue, I know not how ;  
Why should I tell thee what thou so well seest ?  
Why should I strive to show what from thy lips  
Would come no mystery ? For me, dark, dark,  
And painful vile oblivion seals my eyes :

PART V. A I strive to search wherefore I am so sad,  
Book III Until a melancholy numbs my limbs ;  
And then upon the grass I sit, and moan  
Like one who once had wings.—O why should I  
Feel cursed and thwarted, when the liegeless air  
Yields to my step aspirant ? Why should I  
Spurn the green turf as hateful to my feet ?  
Goddess benign, point forth some unknown thing :  
Are there not other regions than this isle ?  
What are the stars ? There is the sun, the sun !  
And the most patient brilliance of the moon !  
And stars by thousands ! Point me out the way  
To any one particular beauteous star,  
And I will flit into it with my lyre,  
And make its silvery splendour pant with bliss.  
I have heard the cloudy thunder : Where is power ?  
Whose hand, whose essence, what divinity  
Make this alarum in the elements,  
While I here idle listen on the shores  
In fearless yet in aching ignorance ?  
O tell me, lonely Goddess, by thy harp,  
That waileth every morn and eventide,  
Tell me why thus I rave about these groves !  
Mute thou remainest—mute ! yet I can read  
A wondrous lesson in thy silent face :  
Knowledge enormous makes a God of me.  
Names, deeds, gray legends, dire events, rebellions,  
Majesties, sovran voices, agonies,  
Creations and destroyings, all at once

PART V. A

Book III

Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,  
And deify me, as if some blithe wine  
Or bright elixir peerless I had drunk,  
And so become immortal.—Thus the God.  
While his enkindled eyes, with level glance  
Beneath his white soft temples, steadfast kept  
Trembling with light upon Mnemosyne.  
Soon wild commotions shook him, and made flush  
All the immortal fairness of his limbs ;  
Most like the struggle at the gate of death ;  
Or liker still to one who should take leave  
Of pale immortal death, and with a pang  
As hot as death's is chill, with fierce convulse  
Die into life : so young Apollo anguish'd :  
His very hair, his golden tresses famed  
Kept undulation round his eager neck.  
During the pain Mnemosyne upheld  
Her arms as one who prophesied.—At length  
Apollo shrieked ;—and lo ! from all his limbs  
Celestial

PART V. B FANATICS have their dreams, wherewith they weave  
Canto I

A paradise for a sect, the savage, too,  
From forth the loftiest fashion of his sleep  
Guesses at heaven; pity these have not  
Traced upon vellum or wild Indian leaf  
The shadows of melodious utterance.  
But bare of laurel they live, dream, and die;  
For Poesy alone can tell her dreams,  
With the fine spell of words alone can save  
Imagination from the sable chain  
And dumb enchantment. Who alive can say,  
Thou art no Poet—mayst not tell thy dreams?  
Since every man whose soul is not a clod  
Hath visions and would speak, if he had loved,  
And been well nurtured in his mother tongue.  
Whether the dream now purposed to rehearse  
Be poet's or fanatic's will be known  
When this warm scribe, my hand, is in the grave.  
¶ Methought I stood where trees of every clime,  
Palm, myrtle, oak, and sycamore, and beech,  
With plantain and spice-blossoms, made a screen,  
In neighbourhood of fountains (by the noise  
Soft-showering in mine ears) and (by the touch  
Of scent) not far from roses. Turning round  
I saw an arbour with a drooping roof  
Of trellis vines, and bells, and larger blooms,  
Like floral censers, swinging light in air;  
Before its wreathed doorway, on a mound  
Of moss, was spread a feast of summer fruits,

PART V. B  
Canto I

Which, nearer seen, seem'd refuse of a meal  
By Angel tasted or our Mother Eve ;  
For empty shells were scatter'd on the grass,  
And grapestalks but half-bare, and remnants more  
Sweet-smelling, whose pure kinds I could not know.  
Still was more plenty than the fabled horn  
Thrice emptied could pour forth at banqueting,  
For Proserpine return'd to her own fields,  
Where the white heifers low. And appetite,  
More yearning than on earth I ever felt,  
Growing within, I ate deliciously ;  
And, after not long, thirsted, for thereby  
Stood a cool vessel of transparent juice  
Sipp'd by the wander'd bee, the which I took,  
And pledging all the mortals of the world,  
And all the dead whose names are in our lips,  
Drank. That full draught is parent of my theme.  
No Asian poppy nor elixir fine  
Of the soon-fading, jealous Caliphat,  
No poison gender'd in close monkish cell,  
To thin the scarlet conclave of old men,  
Could so have rapt unwilling life away.  
Among the fragrant husks and berries crush'd  
Upon the grass I struggled hard against  
The domineering potion, but in vain :  
The cloudy swoon came on, and down I sank,  
Like a Silenus on an antique vase.  
How long I slumber'd 'tis a chance to guess.  
When sense of life return'd I started up,

**PART V. B** As if with wings, but the fair trees were gone,  
**Canto I** The mossy mound and arbour were no more :  
I look'd around me upon the curved sides  
Of an old sanctuary, with roof august,  
Builded so high, it seem'd that filmed clouds  
Might spread beneath as o'er the stars of heaven.  
So old the place was, I remember'd none  
The like upon the earth : what I had seen  
Of gray cathedrals, buttress'd walls, rent towers,  
The superannuations of sunk realms,  
Or Nature's rocks toil'd hard in waves and winds,  
Seem'd but the faulture of decrepit things  
To that eternal domed monument.  
Upon the marble at my feet there lay  
Store of strange vessels and large draperies,  
Which needs had been of dyed asbestos wove,  
Or in that place the moth could not corrupt,  
So white the linen, so, in some, distinct  
Ran imageries from a sombre loom.  
All in a mingled heap confus'd there lay  
Robes, golden tongs, censer, and chafing-dish,  
Girdles, and chains, and holy jewelries.  
¶ Turning from these with awe, once more I raised  
My eyes to fathom the space every way :  
The embossed roof, the silent massy range  
Of columns north and south, ending in mist  
Of nothing ; then to Eastward, where black gates  
Were shut against the sunrise evermore ;  
Then to the West I look'd, and saw far off

PART V. B  
Canto I

An image, huge of feature as a cloud,  
At level of whose feet an altar slept,  
To be approach'd on either side by steps  
And marble balustrade, and patient travail  
To count with toil the innumerable degrees.  
Towards the altar sober-paced I went  
Repressing haste as too unholy there ;  
And, coming nearer, saw beside the shrine  
One minist'ring ; and there arose a flame.  
When in midday the sickening east-wind  
Shifts sudden to the south, the small warm rain  
Melts out the frozen incense from all flowers,  
And fills the air with so much pleasant health  
That even the dying man forgets his shroud ; |  
Even so that lofty sacrificial fire,  
Sending forth Maian incense, spread around  
Forgetfulness of everything but bliss,  
And clouded all the altar with soft smoke ;  
From whose white fragrant curtains thus I heard  
Language pronounc'd : If thou canst not ascend  
These steps, die on that marble where thou art.  
Thy flesh, near cousin to the common dust,  
Will parch for lack of nutriment ; thy bones  
Will wither in few years, and vanish so  
That not the quickest eye could find a grain  
Of what thou now art on that pavement cold.  
The sands of thy short life are spent this hour,  
And no hand in the universe can turn  
Thy hourglass, if these gummed leaves be burnt

PART V. B Ere thou canst mount up these immortal steps.

Canto I

I heard, I look'd : two senses both at once,  
So fine, so subtle, felt the tyranny  
Of that fierce threat and the hard task proposed.  
Prodigious seem'd the toil ; the leaves were yet  
Burning, when suddenly a palsied chill  
Struck from the paved level up my limbs,  
And was ascending quick to put cold grasp  
Upon those streams that pulse beside the throat.  
I shriek'd, and the sharp anguish of my shriek  
Stung my own ears ; I strove hard to escape  
The numbness, strove to gain the lowest step.  
Slow, heavy, deadly was my pace ; the cold  
Grew stifling, suffocating at the heart ;  
And when I clasp'd my hands I felt them not.  
One minute before death my iced foot touch'd  
The lowest stair ; and, as it touch'd, life seem'd  
To pour in at the toes ; I mounted up  
As once fair angels on a ladder flew  
From the green turf to heaven. Holy Power,  
Cried I, approaching near the horned shrine,  
What am I that should so be saved from death ?  
What am I that another death came not  
To choke my utterance, sacrilegious, here ?  
Then said the veiled shadow : Thou hast felt  
What 'tis to die and live again before  
Thy fated hour ; that thou hadst power to do so  
Is thine own safety ; thou hast dated on  
Thy doom. High Prophetess, said I, purge off,

Benign, if so it please thee, my mind's film.  
None can usurp this height, returned that shade,  
But those to whom the miseries of the world  
Are misery, and will not let them rest.  
All else who find a haven in the world,  
Where they may thoughtless sleep away their days  
If by a chance into this fane they come,  
Rot on the pavement where thou rottedst half.  
Are there not thousands in the world, said I  
Encouraged by the sooth voice of the shade,  
Who love their fellows even to the death,  
Who feel the giant agony of the world,  
And more, like slaves to poor humanity,  
Labour for mortal good ? I sure should see  
Other men here, but I am here alone.  
Those whom thou spakest of are no visionaries,  
Rejoin'd that voice ; they are no dreamers weak ;  
They seek no wonder but the human face,  
No music but a happy-noted voice : ]  
They come not here, they have no thought to come ;  
And thou art here, for thou art less than they.  
What benefit canst thou do, or all thy tribe,  
To the great world ? Thou art a dreaming thing,  
A fever of thyself : think of the earth :  
What bliss, even in hope, is there for thee ?  
What haven ? every creature hath its home,  
Every sole man hath days of joy and pain,  
Whether his labours be sublime or low—  
The pain alone, the joy alone, distinct :

PART V. B Only the dreamer venoms all his days,  
Canto I Bearing more woe than all his sins deserve.  
Therefore, that happiness be somewhat shar'd,  
Such things as thou art are admitted oft  
Into like gardens thou didst pass erewhile,  
And suffer'd in these temples : for that cause  
Thou standest safe beneath this statue's knees.  
That I am favour'd for unworthiness,  
By such propitious parley medicined  
In sickness not ignoble, I rejoice,  
Aye, and could weep for love of such award.  
So answered I, continuing, If it please,  
Majestic shadow, tell me where I am,  
Whose altar this, for whom this incense curls ; .  
What image this whose face I cannot see  
For the broad marble knees ; and who thou art,  
Of accent feminine, so courteous ?  
¶ Then the tall shade, in drooping linen veil'd,  
Spoke out, so much more earnest, that her breath  
Stirr'd the thin folds of gauze that drooping hung  
About a golden censer from her hand  
Pendent ; and by her voice I knew she shed  
Long-treasured tears. This temple, sad and lone,  
Is all spar'd from the thunder of a war  
Foughten long since by giant hierarchy  
Against rebellion : this old image here,  
Whose carved features wrinkled as he fell,  
Is Saturn's ; I, Moneta, left supreme,  
Sole Priestess of his desolation.

I had no words to answer, for my tongue,  
Useless, could find about its roofed home  
No syllable of a fit majesty  
To make rejoinder to Moneta's mourn :  
There was a silence, while the altar's blaze  
Was fainting for sweet food. I look'd thereon,  
And on the paved floor, where nigh were piled  
Faggots of cinnamon, and many heaps  
Of other crisped spicewood : then again  
I look'd upon the altar, and its horns  
Whiten'd with ashes, and its lang'rous flame,  
And then upon the offerings again ;  
And so, by turns, till sad Moneta cried :  
The sacrifice is done, but not the less  
Will I be kind to thee for thy good will.  
My power, which to me is still a curse,  
Shall be to thee a wonder, for the scenes  
Still swooning vivid through my globed brain,  
With an electoral changing misery,  
Thou shalt with these dull mortal eyes behold  
Free from all pain, if wonder pain thee not.  
As near as an immortal's sphered words  
Could to a mother's soften were these last :  
And yet I had a terror of her robes,  
And chiefly of the veils that from her brow  
Hung pale, and curtain'd her in mysteries,  
That made my heart too small to hold its blood.  
This saw that Goddess, and with sacred hand  
Parted the veils. Then saw I a wan face,

PART V. B Not pin'd by human sorrows, but bright-blanch'd

Canto I By an immortal sickness which kills not ;

It works a constant change, which happy death  
Can put no end to ; deathwards progressing  
To no death was that visage ; it had past  
The lily and the snow ; and beyond these  
I must not think now, though I saw that face.  
But for her eyes I should have fled away ;  
They held me back with a benignant light,  
Soft, mitigated by divinest lids  
Half-closed, and visionless entire they seem'd  
Of all external things ; they saw me not,  
But in black splendour beam'd, like the mild moon,  
Who comforts those she sees not, who knows not  
What eyes are upward cast. As I had found  
A grain of gold upon a mountain side,  
And, twinged with avarice, strain'd out my eyes  
To search its sullen entrails rich with ore,  
So, at the view of sad Moneta's brow,  
I ask'd to see what things the hollow brain  
Behind enwombed : what high tragedy  
In the dark secret chambers of her skull  
Was acting, that could give so dread a stress  
To her cold lips, and fill with such a light  
Her planetary eyes, and touch her voice  
With such a sorrow ? Shade of Memory !  
Cried I, with act adorant at her feet,  
By all the gloom hung round thy fallen house,  
By this last temple, by the golden age,

PART V. B  
Canto I

By great Apollo, thy dear foster-child,  
And by thyself, forlorn divinity,  
The pale Omega of a wither'd race,  
Let me behold, according as thou saidst,  
What in thy brain so ferments to and fro !  
No sooner had this conjuration past  
My devout lips, than side by side we stood  
(Like a stunt bramble by a solemn pinc)  
Deep in the shady sadness of a vale  
Far-sunken from the healthy breath of morn,  
Far from the fiery noon and eve's one star.  
Onward I look'd beneath the gloomy boughs,  
And saw what first I thought an Image huge,  
Like to the Image pedestal'd so high  
In Saturn's temple ; then Moneta's voice  
Came brief upon mine ear—So Saturn sat  
When he had lost his realms. Whereon there grew  
A power within me of enormous ken  
To see as a God sees, and take the depth  
Of things as nimbly as the outward eye  
Can size and shape pervade. The lofty theme  
Of those few words hung vast before my mind  
With half-unravel'd web. I set myself  
Upon an eagle's watch, that I might see,  
And seeing ne'er forgot. No stir of life  
Was in this shrouded vale,—not so much air  
As in the zoning of a summer's day  
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass ;  
But where the dead leaf fell there did it rest.

PART V. B A stream went noiseless by, still deaden'd more  
Canto I By reason of the fallen divinity  
Spreading more shade ; the Naiad 'mid her reeds  
Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.  
¶ Along the margin-sand large foot-marks went  
No further than to where old Saturn's feet  
Had rested, and there slept how long a sleep !  
Degraded, cold, upon the sodden ground  
His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,  
Unsceptred, and his realmless eyes were closed ;  
While his bow'd head seem'd listening to the Earth,  
His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.  
¶ It seem'd no force could wake him from his place ;  
But there came one who, with a kindred hand,  
Touch'd his wide shoulders, after bending low  
With reverence, though to one who knew it not.  
Then came the griev'd voice of Mnemosyne,  
And griev'd I hearken'd. That divinity  
Whom thou saw'st step from yon forlornest wood,  
And with slow pace approach our fallen king,  
Is Thea, softest-natured of our brood.  
I mark'd the Goddess, in fair statuary  
Surpassing wan Moneta by the head,  
And in her sorrow nearer woman's tears.  
There was a listening fear in her regard,  
As if calamity had but begun ;  
As if the vanward clouds of evil days  
Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear  
Was with its stored thunder labouring up.

PART V. B  
Canto I

One hand she press'd upon that aching spot  
Where beats the human heart, as if just there,  
Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain ;  
The other upon Saturn's bended neck  
She laid, and to the level of his hollow ear  
Leaning with parted lips some words she spake  
In solemn tenor and deep organ-tone ;  
Some mourning words, which in our feeble tongue  
Would come in this-like accenting ; how frail  
To that large utterance of the early gods !  
¶ Saturn, look up ! and for what, poor lost king ?  
I have no comfort for thee ; no, not one ;  
I cannot cry, Wherefore thus sleepest thou ?  
For Heaven is parted from thee, and the Earth  
Knows thee not, so afflicted, for a God.  
And Ocean, too, with all its solemn noise,  
Has from thy sceptre pass'd ; and all the air  
Is emptied of thine hoary majesty.  
Thy thunder, captious at the new command,  
Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house ;  
And thy sharp lightning, in unpractised hands,  
Scorches and burns our once serene domain.  
With such remorseless speed still come new woes,  
That unbelief has not a space to breathe.  
Saturn ! sleep on : me thoughtless, why should I  
Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude ?  
Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes ?  
Saturn ! sleep on, while at thy feet I weep.  
¶ As when upon a tranced summer-night

**PART V. B** Forests, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,  
Canto I Dream, and so dream all night without a noise,  
Save from one gradual solitary gust,  
Swelling upon the silence, dying off,  
As if the ebbing air had but one wave,  
So came these words and went ; the while in tears  
She prest her fair large forehead to the earth,  
Just where her fallen hair might spread in curls  
A soft and silken net for Saturn's feet.  
Long, long these two were postured motionless,  
Like sculpture builded-up upon the grave  
Of their own power. A long awful time  
I look'd upon them : still they were the same ;  
The frozen God still bending to the earth,  
And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet ;  
Moneta silent. Without stay or prop  
But my own weak mortality, I bore  
The load of this eternal quietude,  
The unchanging gloom and the three fixed shapes  
Ponderous upon my senses, a whole moon ;  
For by my burning brain I measured sure  
Her silver seasons shedded on the night,  
And every day by day methought I grew  
More gaunt and ghostly. Oftentimes I pray'd  
Intense, that death would take me from the vale  
And all its burthens ; gasping with despair  
Of change, hour after hour I curs'd myself,  
Until old Saturn rais'd his faded eyes,  
And look'd around and saw his kingdom gone,

PART V. B  
Canto I

And all the gloom and sorrow of the place,  
And that fair kneeling Goddess at his feet.

¶ As the moist scent of flowers, and grass, and leaves,  
Fills forest-dells with a pervading air,  
Known to the woodland nostril, so the words  
Of Saturn fill'd the mossy glooms around,  
Even to the hollows of time-eaten oaks,  
And to the windings of the foxes' hole,  
With sad low tones, while thus he spake, and sent  
Strange musings to the solitary Pan.

Moan, brethren, moan, for we are swallow'd up  
And buried from all godlike exercise  
Of influence benign on planets pale,  
And peaceful sway upon man's harvesting,  
And all those acts which Deity supreme  
Doth ease its heart of love in. Moan and wail ;  
Moan, brethren, moan ; for lo, the rebel spheres  
Spin round ; the stars their ancient courses keep ;  
Clouds still with shadowy moisture haunt the earth,  
Still suck their fill of light from sun and moon ;  
Still buds the tree, and still the seashores murmur ;  
There is no death in all the universe,  
No smell of death.—There shall be death. Moan, moan ;  
Moan, Cybele, moan : for thy pernicious babes  
Have changed a god into an aching palsy.  
Moan, brethren, moan, for I have no strength left ;  
Weak as the reed, weak, feeble as my voice.  
Oh ! oh ! the pain, the pain of feebleness ;  
Moan, moan, for still I thaw ; or give me help,

PART V. B Throw down those imps, and give me victory.

Canto I

Let me hear other groans, and trumpets blown  
Of triumph calm, and hymns of festival,  
From the gold peaks of heaven's high-piled clouds ;  
Voices of soft proclaim, and silver stir  
Of strings in hollow shells ; and there shall be  
Beautiful things made new, for the surprise  
Of the sky-children. So he feebly ceased,  
With such a poor and sickly-sounding pause,  
Methought I heard some old man of the earth  
Bewailing earthly loss ; nor could my eyes  
And ears act with that unison of sense  
Which marries sweet sound with the grace of form,  
And dolorous accent from a tragic harp  
With large-limb'd visions. More I scrutinised.  
Still fix'd he sat beneath the sable trees,  
Whose arms spread straggling in wild serpent forms,  
With leaves all hush'd ; his awful presence there,  
Now all was silent, gave a deadly lie  
To what I erewhile heard : only his lips  
Trembled amid the white curls of his beard ;  
They told the truth, though round the snowy locks  
Hung nobly, as upon the face of heaven  
A mid-day fleece of clouds. Thea arose,  
And stretched her white arm through the hollow dark,  
Pointing some whither : whereat he too rose,  
Like a vast giant, seen by men at sea  
To grow pale from the waves at dull midnight.  
They melted from my sight into the woods ;

Ere I could turn, Moneta cried, These twain  
Are speeding to the families of grief,  
Where roof'd in by black rocks they waste in pain  
And darkness for no hope. And she spake on,  
As ye may read who can unwearied pass  
Onward from the Antichamber of this dream,  
Where, even at the open doors, awhile  
I must delay, and glean my memory  
Of her high praise—perhaps no further dare.

PART V. B  
Canto I

PART V. B MORTAL, that thou may'st understand aright,

Canto II

I humanise my sayings to thine ear,  
Making comparisons of earthly things ;  
Or thou might'st better listen to the wind,  
Whose language is to thee a barren noise,  
Though it blows legend-laden thro' the trees.  
In melancholy realms big tears are shed,  
More sorrow like to this, and such like woe,  
Too huge for mortal tongue or pen of scribe.  
The Titans fierce, self-hid or prison-bound,  
Groan for the old allegiance once more,  
Listening in their doom for Saturn's voice.  
But one of the whole eagle-brood still keeps  
His sov'reignty, and rule, and majesty :  
Blazing Hyperion on his orbed fire  
Still sits, still snuffs the incense teeming up  
From Man to the Sun's God—yet unsecure.  
For as upon the earth dire prodigies  
Fright and perplex, so also shudders he ;  
Not at dog's howl or gloom-bird's Even screech,  
Or the familiar visitings of one  
Upon the first toll of his passing bell,  
Or prophesyings of the midnight lamp ;  
But horrors, portion'd to a giant nerve,  
Make great Hyperion ache. His palace bright,  
Bastion'd with pyramids of glowing gold,  
And touch'd with shade of bronzed obelisks,  
Glared a blood-red thro' all the thousand courts,  
Arches, and domes, and fiery galleries ;

And all its curtains of Aurorian clouds  
Flush angerly ; when he would taste the wreaths  
Of incense, breathed aloft from sacred hills,  
Instead of sweets his ample palate takes  
Savour of poisonous brass and metals sick.  
Wherefore when harbour'd in the sleepy West,  
After the full completion of fair day,  
For rest divine upon exalted couch,  
And slumber in the arms of melody,  
He paces through the pleasant hours of ease,  
With strides colossal, on from hall to hall,  
While far within each aisle and deep recess  
His winged minions in close clusters stand  
Amaz'd, and full of fear ; like anxious men,  
Who on a wide plain gather in sad troops,  
When earthquakes jar their battlements and towers.  
Even now, while Saturn, roused from icy trance,  
Goes step for step with Thea from yon woods,  
Hyperion, leaving twilight in the rear,  
Is sloping to the threshold of the West.  
Thither we tend. ¶ Now in clear light I stood,  
Relieved from the dusk vale. Mnemosyne  
Was sitting on a square-edged polish'd stone,  
That in its lucid depth reflected pure  
Her priestess' garments. My quick eyes ran on  
From stately nave to nave, from vault to vault,  
Through bowers of fragrant and enwreathed light,  
And diamond-paned lustrous long arcades.  
Anon rush'd by the bright Hyperion ;

**PART V. B** His flaming robes stream'd out beyond his heels,  
**Canto II** And gave a roar as if of earthly fire,  
That scared away the meek ethereal hours,  
And made their dove-wings tremble. On he flared.

## SONNET

MUCH have I travell'd in the realms of gold  
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen ;  
Round many western islands have I been  
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.  
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told  
That deep brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne ;  
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold :  
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken ;  
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men  
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—  
Silent upon a peak in Darien.

EXPLICIT

## TABLE OF YEARS

	Page
1815 HOW many bards gild the lapses of time . . . . .	120
Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold	218
1816 Lo ! I must tell a tale of chivalry . . . . .	30
Come hither, all sweet maidens soberly . . . . .	125
O Solitude ! If I must with thee dwell . . . . .	119
To one who has been long in city pent . . . . .	121
Many the wonders I this day have seen . . . . .	118
Keen fitful gusts are whisp'ring here and there . . . . .	119
Small, busy flames play through the fresh laid coals . . . . .	118
Great spirits now on earth are sojourning . . . . .	122
The poetry of earth is never dead . . . . .	120
What is more gentle than a wind in sum- mer . . . . .	33
I stood tip-toe upon a little hill . . . . .	21
1817 After dark vapours have oppress'd our plains . . . . .	126
O Thou, whose mighty palace roof doth hang . . . . .	129
O Sorrow . . . . .	132
1818 O thou ! whose face hath felt the Winter's wind . . . . .	164
No ! those days are gone away . . . . .	154
Souls of Poets dead and gone . . . . .	153
220	

	Page	
1818	The stranger lighted from his steed . . . . .	75
	Shed no tear ! O shed no tear ! . . . . .	69
	O golden-tongued Romance, with serene lute ! . . . . .	121
	When I have fears that I may cease to be . . . . .	122
	Time's sea hath been five years at its slow ebb . . . . .	123
	Four Seasons fill the measure of the year . . . . .	126
	Mother of Hermes ! and still youthful Maia . . . . .	128
	Fair Isabel, poor simple Isabel ! . . . . .	48
	Ever let the fancy roam . . . . .	147
	Bards of Passion and of Mirth . . . . .	151
	Deep in the shady sadness of a vale . . . . .	166
1819	St Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was ! . . . . .	76
	Upon a Sabbath-day it fell . . . . .	70
	One morn before me were three figures seen . . . . .	161
	Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness . . . . .	142
	No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist . . . . .	159
	Why did I laugh to-night ? No voice will tell : . . . . .	125
	As Hermes once took to his feathers light . . . . .	124
	O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms . . . . .	90
	O soft embalmer of the still midnight . . . . .	124
	O goddess ! hear these tuneless numbers wrung . . . . .	144
	My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains . . . . .	138
	Upon a time, before the faery broods . . . . .	92
		221

	Page
1819 Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness . . . . .	157
I cry your mercy—pity—love ! aye—love. . . . .	123
Fanatics have their dreams, wherewith they weave . . . . .	198
1820 Bright Star ! would I were stedfast as thou art . . . . .	18

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